



Nunquam CHRISTO Charior quam sub Cruce gemens Eccle-
sia

T H E
NEW DISTEMPER.

O R T H E
Dissenters Usual Pleas
F O R
Comprehension, Toleration,
A N D T H E
Renouncing the Covenant,
Consider'd and Discuss'd.

Non quis, sed quid.

L O N D O N,
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OF THE
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FOR THE
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T H E
P R E F A C E
T O T H E
R E A D E R,

W^HO is here presented a Second time with a very good Book, which was Publish'd Five years since, but is now as seasonable as then, the Pleas being still the same; of some, for Comprehension; of others, for Toleration; and both Parties agreeing in their wishes and desires, that the Ab-renunciation of the Covenant may no longer be requir'd.

In the following Consideration of the Modern Pleas insisted on to those ends, the Lawfulness of the Impositions relating to Church and State Matters is justify'd; the reasonableness of continuing the Obligation

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to renounce the Covenant is evidenc'd; the unreasonableness of the clamours for Liberty of Conscience, and against using force in propagating Religion, is manifested; and the pretences to the contrary, from the probable decay of Trade if those clamours be not comply'd with, from the Number and Merit of the Non-conformists, and the need the Nation has of their assistances against Popery, are prov'd really insignificant and groundless.

As to which last, it's very truly observ'd by the Reverend Author (p. 141.) that
“ *notwithstanding all the Zeal which Non-*
“ *conformists declare against Popery——*
“ *they know very well how to joyn both*
“ *Counsels and Arms together; to which he*
“ *annexes a pregnant evidence that they did*
“ *so in the late Rebellion, from the Testimo-*
“ *ny of King Charles the First, in his De-*
“ *claration concerning the success of the Bat-*
“ *tel at Edge-hill, on Octob. 23. 1643. in*
“ *these words, “ All men know the great*
“ *numbers of Papists which Serve in their*
“ *Armies, Commanders and others; the*
“ *great Industry they have us'd to corrupt*
“ *the Loyalty, and affection of all our loving*
“ *Subjects*

to the Reader.

“ *Subjects of that Religion, the private*
“ *promises and undertakings that they have*
“ *made to them, that if they would assist*
“ *them against Us, all the Laws made in*
“ *their prejudice should be repeal'd.*——

In the days of Queen Elizabeth, the
Disciplinarians, as well as Papists, Perse-
cuted Her Majesty so vigorously, that they
thereby open'd the Door, and prepar'd the
way to the Spanish Invasion, and therefore
she gave order to the then Lord Keeper
Puckering to Warn the Parliament not to
hearken to them: Which he accordingly
did, in his Speech in the House of Lords
in these words—— “ *Especially*

“ *you are commanded by Her*
“ *Majesty to take heed that no*
“ *ear be given, nor time affor-*
“ *ded, to the wearisom sollicitati-*
“ *ons of those that commonly be*
“ *call'd Puritans, wherewithal the late*
“ *Parliaments have been exceedingly im-*
“ *portun'd; which sort of men whilst in*
“ *the giddiness of their Spirits, they labour*
“ *and strive to advance a new Elder-ship,*
“ *they do nothing else but disturb the good*
“ *repose of the Church and the Common-*

See Dr.
Pierce's
New Dis-
coverer
discover'd
p. 109.

“ *wealth;*

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“wealth; which is as well Grounded for
“the body of Religion it self, and as well
“guided for the Discipline, as any Realm
“that professeth the Truth—— And as
“the present case standeth, it may be doubt-
“ed, whether they or the Jesuits do offer
“more danger, or be more speedily to be
“repress’d. For albeit the Jesuits do em-
“poyson the hearts of Her Majesty’s Sub-
“jects, under a pretext of Conscience, to
“withdraw them from their obedience due
“to Her Majesty, yet they do it but close-
“ly, and only in privy corners; but these
“men do both publish in their Printed
“Books, and teach in all their Conventi-
“cles sundry Opinions, not only dangerous
“to the well settled State and Policy of the
“Realm, by putting a Pike between the
“Clergy and the Laity, but also much de-
“rogatory to Her Sacred Majesty and Her
“Crown, as well by the diminution of Her
“Antient and lawful Revenues, and by
“denying Her Highness Prerogative and
“Supremacy, as by offering Peril to Her
“Majesty’s Safety in Her own Kingdom.
“In all which things (however in many
“other points they pretend to be at War
“with the Popish Jesuits, yet) by the Se-
“paration

to the Reader.

“paration of themselves from the Unity of
“their Fellow Subjects, and by abusing the
“Sacred Authority and Majesty of their
“Prince, they do both joyn and concur
“with the Jesuits in opening the door,
“and preparing the way to the Spanish
“Invasion that is threatned against the
“Realm.

*And 'tis worth the Observation, says
Dr. Heylin in his [History of the Pres-
byterians] p. 280. “That the Puritans
“were then most busie, as well in setting
“up their Discipline, as in publishing Rail-
“ing and Seditious Pamphlets; when the
“Spaniards were hovering on the Seas
“with their terrible Navy; at what time
“they conceiv'd and not improbably, that
“the Queen and Council would be other-
“wise busied, than to take notice of their
“Practices, or suppress their doings; or
“rather that they durst not call them into
“Question for their words or actions, for
“fear of alienating the affections of so
“strong a Party as they had Raised unto
“themselves. The serious apprehension of
“which mischievous Counsels prevail'd so
“far on Leicester and Walsingham, that
“they*

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“ they did absolutely renounce any farther
“ Intercession for them, professing that they
“ had been horribly abus’d with their Hy-
“ pocrisie. —————

The same Author acquaints us p. 304.
with the Character given of those turbulent
Spirits by Arch-bishop Whitgift, in a Let-
ter of his to the Privy Council (occasion’d
by a Paper of some Suffolk Ministers) in
these words. “ True it is they are no Je-
“ suits, neither are they charg’d to be so,
“ but notwithstanding, they are contenti-
“ ous in the Church of England, and by
“ their contentions, minister occasion of
“ offence to those which are seduc’d by Je-
“ suits, and give the Sacraments against
“ the Form of Publick Prayer us’d in this
“ Church, and by Law establish’d, and
“ thereby increase the number of them, and
“ confirm them in their wilfulness. They
“ also make a Schism in the Church, and
“ draw many other of Her Majesties Sub-
“ jects to the misliking of Her Laws and
“ Government in Causes Ecclesiastical: So
“ far are they from perswading them to
“ obedience; or at the least, if they per-
“ swade them to it in the one part of Her
“ Autho-

to the Reader.

*“ Authority—in Causes Civil, they diswade
“ them from it as much in the other—in
“ Causes Ecclesiastical; so that indeed they
“ pluck down with the one hand, that which
“ they seem to build with the other.*

*And now if the same Persons liv'd in
our days, would they not have great reason
to make the same complaints of our Non-
conformists? Is it not too sadly apparent
from the late Books and Pamphlets of these
kind of men, against the State and Church
of England, that they endeavour to do
that work which Jesuits, and Jesuited Pa-
pists do most heartily wish were accomplish'd?
What are their [Healing Papers] and
[Pleas for Peace]? their [Melius In-
quirendum's] and [Terms of (pretended)
Christian Concord]? Their Tracts of
Schism and Scandal, and [The Mischief
of Impositions] their [Church-Stories]
and [Moral Prognostications] their An-
swers to, and Invectives against Dr. Stil-
lingfleet's (late) Sermon—but so many
Engines and contrivances of mischief and
Destruction to the Church of England?
And [in that respect] fitter to be written
by an Ireland, or a Pickering, a Gavan,
or*

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*or a Whitebread, than by an Humphry,
or a Baxter, a Corbet, or an Alsop.*

*The Discovery of the late Villainous
and Hellish Plot of the Papists against our
King and Laws was immediately follow'd,
if not usher'd in, with a Pamphlet call'd
[An Healing Paper, or, A Catholick
Receipt for Union between the mode-
rate Bishop, and sober Non-conformist]
Wherein is expected the Bishops should
yield to such Terms of Accommodation
as these— The Baptizing Children
without Sureties— The giving the
Communion to those that refuse to re-
ceive it Kneeling— Laying aside all
the Ceremonies, not excepting that of
the Cross in Baptism, though the Pa-
rent of the Child should desire it —
Not requiring Subscription to the Three
Articles in the Thirty sixth Canon —
Nor the Oath of Canonical obedience
to the Bishop of the Diocess— And
as to the Liturgy in General, that Author
(though look'd upon as one of the most mo-
derate among the Non-conformists, yet)
“professes (p. 7.) he dares not promise
“to Conform to it as now establish'd, but
with*

to the Reader.

*“ with the reservation of a necessary and
“ just Liberty, both for his Conscience in
“ any matter or thing wherein he doubts,
“ and for prudence in regard to time, place,
“ and Circumstances , to act as appears to
“ him most conducive to the Interest of the
“ Church and Edification of the People.
“ And with such a reservation as this, sayes
“ he, I subscribe that I will conform to the
“ Liturgy of the Church of England, as it
“ is now by Law establish’d ; and with the
same reservation, say I, he may subscribe
that he will Conform to the Liturgy, the
Breviary , and Missal of the Church of
Rome.*

*• From which Premises ’tis manifest that
his Receipt for Union is destructive of
the Order establish’d among us as to Church
Matters, and very proper to keep up Secta-
rian Divisions, and Schismatical Practises
against that Order.*

*And yet he would fain have the Bishops
to be so moderate as to agree to these Terms,
and to dispense with that Law which en-
joyns the contrary ; nay he’s so bold, as to
press them to it upon such extravagant and
pernicious*

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pernicious principles as these, P. 23.—
“*That the Bishop is out of conscience to the*
“*6th. Commandment to take heed as he*
“*would of his life, of putting a man upon*
“*any more than he’s convinc’d he can safe-*
“*ly do. — That when the Nonconformist*
“*does what he can (without offending his*
“*own conscience) the Law of God will bear*
“*him out in that which he does not. —*
“*That ’tis against the Law of Charity,*
“*Mercy, and Righteousness, to inflict the*
“*punishment due by Law on those that*
“*transgress the Law out of conscience —*
“*That all Texts that require love, and*
“*following of peace and tenderness to one*
“*another’s consciences, and forbid offending*
“*Christ’s little ones, are all of them war-*
“*rants to the Bishop for his forbearing to*
“*execute the penalty annexed to those*
“*Laws which are disobey’d on that Prin-*
“*ciple.*

Which Doctrines are not only false in themselves, but destructive to the established Order in our Land; yea, and to all Government in any Nation where the Inhabitants have Religion, and wit enough, to capacitate them to pretend to conscience in their
actings;

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actings ; and may as justly be urg'd against executing the penal Laws on any Jesuits that would murder the King, or any other Malefactors that transgress the Laws of any State, out of a principle of conscience, and because they are either perswaded that they enjoyn something which is sinful, or are in doubt whether that which they enjoyn be lawful.

And although (p. 4.) he speaks of a prudence to be us'd in discerning those that
“ are truly from those that are pretendedly
“ conscientious ; yet in this matter the forementioned Maxims will still have the same venomous and malignant influence upon all Government : for if the most notorious Malefactor pretend conscience for his crime, it being impossible for the Magistrate to know his heart, and consequently to convince him of the falsehood of that pretence, he must by those Maxims forbear inflicting, even on such a man, the deserved penalty for fear of breaking the sixth Commandment by destroying a weak Brother, for whom Christ dy'd : who could not (as himself avows) obey the Law without sinning against his own soul, which (in
the

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(in the case suppos'd) dictated to him that he ought to act contrary to that which the Law enjoyned.

In the year 1679. the same design against the welfare of our Church and State, and the legal establishments ordained to promote and continue that welfare, was carried on and manag'd with a most ungodly dexterity in the Book nicknam'd [A Plea for Peace,] written, as the Title page tells us, by Richard Baxter, the matter of which Book, or at least of those parts of it which more immediately relate to the Act for Uniformity, have been already answer'd by the judicious Impleader of that Plea; But why he should not have taken notice also of his manner of handling things I know not, unless perhaps because he saw he could not do it without a mighty Indignation, and the giving him such correptory correction for it as he was not then at leisure to bestow upon him.

But I hope some body will ere long be so much at leisure, and will make so reasonable a use of it, as to treat that Book and it's Author with a severity suitable to their

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their deserts ; for the Book abounds with such odious insinuations as to Persons, and such invidious representations of things as make it look more like the issue of an inveterate Spirit, and Malice, than of a mind really inclin'd to Peace and Unity.

And as to the main business pretended (in the Epistle p. 5.) to be done in the Book, viz. the [telling us barely what Richard Baxter dare not doe] (that is, to what he dares not Conform) 'tis a Magnum Nihil, a fardle of Impertinencies ; for instead of doing [that] barely, he has made it his business to tell us what some Non-conformists (in General) dare not do ; no where (that I remember) plainly telling us what himself (in particular) dares not Conform to ; not so much as to that point which he insists on so largely, viz. The Cross in Baptism.

He talks indeed (among other trifling exceptions) of the great fear the Non-conformists have, that (though the Conformists deny it to be a Sacrament (among other Reasons) because 'tis not of Divine Institution, which they affirm necessarily requisite

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to the being of a Sacrament (properly, and not Catachrestically, so call'd) yet) 'tis a Sacrament made [by man] or (as himself words it in other places) 'tis [An Humane Sacrament.] But how Non-sensical and contradictions a reproach that is, himself has (I doubt not) wit enough to know, though he has not grace enough to acknowledge it.

Nor is he himself so scared with that Mormo, but that notwithstanding it, he can submit even to that Ceremony, unless he be now of another mind than he was Anno 1659. In his Fifth Dispute of Church-Government; For though p. 417. he has these words (§. 52.) of all our Ceremonies, there's none that I have more suspected to be simply unlawful, than the Cross in Baptism, yet p. 418. he has these words—— yet dare I not peremptorily say that it is unlawful—— Now p. 484. he has these—— As an erroneous Judgment will not excuse us from obedience to our Governours, so much less will a doubtfulness excuse us—— And the duty of obeying our Governours being certain, and the sinfulness of the thing commanded being uncertain, and unknown,
and

to the Reader.

*“ and only suspected, we must go on the sure
“ side. Whence it follows that (according
to these Principles) he not only may, but
ought to use the sign of the Cross in Baptism,
forasmuch as he only suspects it to be, and
is not absolutely certain that 'tis unlawful.*

*I must not rid my hands of this first part
of his Plea for Peace, without presenting
the Reader with one Instance of his odious
and invidious manner of writing. In the
Epistle p. 2, 3. he insinuates that some
Reverend Bishops would not give him
leave to render his Reasons for Non-con-
formity, though he offer'd to beg that leave
of them on his Knees——and p. 8. That the
Clergy know not what manner of Spirit
they are of, when they urge Rules to exe-
cute the Laws against the Non-confor-
mists—— and in the Book it self, p. 238.
“ While, sayes he, the dreadful Fire
“ (Plagues I suppose he meant) was wasting
“ London, and other Corporations, the
“ Parliament and Bishops were at Oxford,
“ making an Oath to drive all Non-confor-
“ mists above Five Miles from all Cities
“ and Corporations that send Burgeesses to
“ Parliament—— The Parliament and
a 2 Bishops.*

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Bishops. *As if the Bishops acted therein as distinct Persons, and not as part of the Parliament; And why not the Parliament, and Knights and Burgeses, as well as Bishops? If he had not design'd by it to render the Bishops more odious than any other part of the Parliament? And this forsooth must be Printed in Capital Letters, for the greater notoriety of the Bishops crime in joyning with the Lords Temporal, and Commons in that Act. And p. 239. he "pretends that at the mention of it his "heart trembl'd. What? for fear it should one day be put in Execution on himself, and his Fellow-Conventiclers? For my part I think he ought rather to have fear'd that the Non-Execution of that Act on such as himself, and others, that take upon them to Preach in unlawful Assemblies, in London and other Corporations, thereby (as the Act it self expresses it,) "taking an opportunity to distill the poisonous Principles of Schism and Rebellion into the hearts of His Majesties Subjects, to the great danger of the Church and Kingdom, I say, He, (and We) ought to fear lest the Non-execution of that Act will one day produce such Convulsions*

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sions in this Body Politick, as will make all our hearts to tremble.

Of the same nature and tendency are other expressions in this Book, as p. 242. "where he talks of [many Ministers avoiding the severities of the Law, and Bishops] and p. 247. our earnest desire is, says he, that the Magistrate would keep up Peace and Order in the Church, that Popish Clergy-men may not think that it belongeth to them alone to do it.

But does this Writer know any of our Clergy-men, who think it belongs to them [only] to keep up Peace and Order? Or if any of them should chance to think so, how comes that to be an Argument of their being Popish? I doubt the man will by degrees arrive at such an height of confidence, as to reproach Queen Elizabeth as Popishly affected, because when Arch-bishop Whitgift first came to the See of Canterbury, "She determin'd to discharge her self from "the trouble of all Church-concernments, "and leave them wholly to his care; and "withall told him, that he should want no

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“countenance or encouragement for carry-
“ing on the great trust committed to him.
“That she was sensible enough into what
“disorder and confusion the Affairs of the
“Church were brought by the connivance of
“some Bishops, the obstinacy of some Mi-
“nisters, and the power of some great
“Lords both in Court and Country, but
“that notwithstanding all these difficulties
“he must resolve, not only to assert the
“Episcopal Power, but also to restore that
“Uniformity in Gods Publick Worship,
“which by the weakness of his Predecessor
“was so much endanger’d, Dr. Heylin’s
History of the Presbyterians, B. 7.
Sect. 37.

Nay it may be he’l in time be so bold as
to reproach the Act for Uniformity 10.
Eliz. as Popish, because (though it doth
“not commit all, yet it does the chief,
“power of keeping up orders in the Church
“to Clergy-men; for it does in Gods
“Name earnestly require and charge all
“the Arch-bishops, Bishops, and other Or-
“dinaries that they shall endeavour them-
“selves to the utmost of their knowledges
“that the due and true Execution of that
Act

to the Reader.

*“ Act may be had throughout their Dio-
“ cesses and Charges, as they will answer
“ before God for such evils and Plagues
“ wherewith Almighty God may justly punish
“ his people for neglecting that good and
“ wholesome Law——To which purpose
“ it enacted also that all and every Arch-
“ bishop and Bishop should not only inflict
“ Church-censures on the Offenders against
“ that Act, but also should and might, at
“ all time and times, at his Liberty, and
“ pleasure, joyn and associate himself by vir-
“ tue of that Act to the Justices of Oyer
“ and Determiner, or the Justices of
“ Assize, at the General Sessions, to be
“ holden in any place within his Diocess,
“ for and to the enquiring, hearing, and
“ determining of the offence there men-
“ tion’d.*

*Which Act is by the late Act for Uni-
formity establis’d and confirm’d to stand
in full force and strength to all intents and
purposes whatsoever, in reference to the
New Book of Common-Prayer, and is to be
apply’d, practis’d, and put in ure for the
punishing of all Offences contrary to the
said Laws, with relation to that Book.*

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By vertue of which Acts I humbly conceive that the present Arch-bishops, Bishops, and other Ordinaries in their respective Diocesses and Charges, are oblig'd to take care that the Penalty of an Hundred Marks be levyed on every Person that by open words declares or speaks any thing in the derogation, depraving or despising of the same Book, or of any thing therein contain'd, or any part thereof.

If now Mr. Baxter should, for his declaring this in Print in derogation, depraving, and despising of our Liturgy and of several things therein contain'd, be made to feel the severity of that Law executed upon him by the care and power of the Arch-bishop, Bishop, or other Ordinary within whose Province, Diocess, or Jurisdiction he resides, I doubt the Devil would tempt him to call them Popish Clergy-men for so doing : and whether he would yield to the temptation or no, we may give a shrewd guess, by observing with what great civility he here treats them in this first Part of his Plea for Peace.

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*I know it may be said to me, Alas! this poor inconsiderable thing Conformity! What, Sir, do you make of it? Is that the Protestant Religion? Are those little matters of any moment, in comparison of Union of Protestants at such a juncture? I answer, that the less the matters are, the more shame 'tis for those that will not Conform to them; and the greater is their Crime, who at such a juncture will rather stand off, and persist in their opposition to the establish'd order than, by complying with it, unite in their endeavours against the Common Enemy: I had almost said, but that I am old enough to know how much of Kin the Principles of some Non-conformists have been, and (notwithstanding the pretenses I meet with in Mr. Baxter's Second Plea for Peace, which are far enough, (too far) from being clear evidences, to the contrary) I doubt still are, to those of the Jesuites; and to remember how much more fatal their designs and attempts, have prov'd to the establish'd order, both in Church and State. And 'twill be a sad sign that themselves are still a part of the Common Enemy, if in
such*

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Such a juncture they will not unite in opposing Treasonable and ruining contrivances, and practises, against the King and Church, because neither Church nor State thinks fit to dissolve, and ruine the establish'd order for their sakes.

And as little a thing as Conformity seems to some, I am sufficiently assur'd that their Salvation or Damnation depends (partly) upon their Conforming, or not Conforming themselves to the just Laws of their Lawful Governours. I shall be sorry therefore, if this be not a part of the Protestant Religion : of the Religion of all true English Protestants, I am sure 'tis a part, and so I am sure 'tis of the Christian, which requires us to yield active subjection and obedience to the Higher Powers, in all Lawful things on pain of Damnation.

Nor will the dictate of a doubting or erroneous Conscience excuse from that obedience, but where men are invincibly ignorant of the Obligation they are under. As for other Persons, who have abilities, and help, enough to acquaint themselves with their duty, and yet transgress the Law,
out

to the Reader.

out of Conscience, and do not obey it, because their weak understandings will not permit that compliance, their case and condition, for ought appears to me, is as dangerous and desperate, as theirs, who thought they did God good Service in Killing the Apostles. I affirm therefore that the Acts in force for Uniformity being, I doubt not, very just and wholesome Laws, they ought to be Conform'd to in the lesser as well as greater things, both by all English Subjects, so far as not to derogate, deprave, or despise the order establish'd by them, and by all English Ministers, that hold themselves under an obligation to exercise the Ministerial Office, so far as is there requir'd to qualifie them for that work. For there being no other lawful way of exercising it in this Nation, but by submitting, first to the things requir'd in the Act for Uniformity, they who exercise it without that submission, do not only transgress the Law of the Nation, but the Law of God too, which requires obedience to all the Lawful constitutions of their lawful Governours.

But this is one of those wholesome Doctrines, which will not go down with this
Pleader

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Pleader for Peace ; *on the contrary, it makes his Stomach rise, and his Blood ferment.*

Another Doctrine which troubles him very much, is that which Mr. Dodwell taught and prov'd so largely the last year in his Book against Schism. [That Persons ordain'd have no more, nor other Power, than their Ordainers profess, or intend to give them ; and, That is certain that the Bishops of all former Ages intended not to give Presbyters Power of Ordaining, or Administring out of their subjection.] Which notions touch'd him so to the quick, that the Gall'd Animal has been wincing, and kicking against the Church of England ever since, especially now that the Reverend Dean of St. Paul's hath lately refresh'd the Wound, by impeaching some of his other darling conceits and practises ; it hath set him so on the fret, and put him into such a Paroxysm, that he layes about him, as if he were bereft of all Judgment and Reason, and animated only with a blind fury and passion ; and so that his blows may knock Dr. Stillingfleet on the Head, he cares not much

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much though they recoil upon himself, and break his own Pate.

Witness that wrathful and peevish Reply to the Doctors Letter, and Answer to his Sermon; wherein he's mightily displeas'd with him, that he does not farther explain his great word [Separation] p. 14. and p. 47. where he makes as if the Doctor had not at all explain'd it, but intended only to fright the Non-conformists with the bare word [Separation] and the sound of the Name, and then takes an advantage to Droll upon the Doctor Pro Modulo suo, and with such a kind of Raillery as, I doubt, he fancy'd to be very Witty. But I would advise him as a Friend, never to offer at Wit again, nor to attempt that or any thing else Invitâ Minervâ; for I dare refer my self to the Verdict of the Reverend Wit-monger of the Party (Vin. Al.) whether ever he read such a fulsome, absurd, clumsy piece of Wit before.

*I might call it also [Scandalously impertinent;] for whereas he asks p. 47. Can any man tell — by any thing in your Book, what that Separation is which
you*

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you condemn? 'tis evident enough to any one that had a mind to know and understand, that that Separation of the Non-conformists against which the Doctor design'd his Sermon, was [their ordinary forbearance of Communion with the Parish Ministers and Churches, in what they judge to be lawful, and then forming Separate Congregations under other Teachers, and by other Rules, than what the establish'd Religion allows,] p. 20.

And this, says the Doctor, is the present case of Separation which I intend to consider, and to make the sinfulness and mischief of it appear.

One would think this made it plain enough what the Doctor meant by [Separation] and yet he has the supercilious confidence to ask the Question aforesaid, [Can any man tell—by any thing in your Book, what that Separation is which you Condemn?] But has that man either Brain or Conscience that deals thus?

Mr.

to the Reader.

Mr. Baxter, it seems, looks upon it as the Doctors duty to imitate him, and to distinguish, or divide, as far as six and twentiethly before he come to the point ; As he has done in his first Plea for Peace, Sect. 6. for Sect. 1. he pretends to give an account of the Non-conformists judgment, how far they hold it lawful, or unlawful, to gather Churches, or to Separate from Churches. This is the point : For explaining this point, that Sixth Section was design'd ; as is evident from its Title : But before he proceeds to Indoctrinate his Readers in that point, he premises no less than Twenty five other Particulars, or sorts of action which he calls Schismatical. And here he tells us that he has describ'd in that Plea, no less than Thirty cases in which Separation is a sin, and near Forty Instances in which some Separation is a duty and no sin, p. 47. And of all this, says he to the Doctor, you here take no notice. As if the Doctor were bound to take notice of every Book that Mr. Baxter has written ; or had nothing else to do but to read an impertinent farrago of Negatively's, and Positively's, that reach as far
as

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as Thirtiethly, or Fortiethly ; when it may be 'tis not an half-penny matter , as to the point to be determin'd, whether Twenty of the Thirty Affirmatives, or Thirty of the Forty Negatives, be true or false ? And when only Thirtiethly or Fortiethly would have done as well, and have prov'd enough, (if not too much) in conscience.

The truth is his way of writing, especially when he undertakes to determine a Question with all the Apparatus and accoutrements belonging as he fancies, to a man of Art, is just as if the Question being put, and a man being ask'd, who this Mr. Baxter is, that raises such a dust, and makes such a noise in the World, he should resolve it First Negatively, and Second Positively.

First Negatively, in a matter of Thirty Particulars : It is not first, such a one call'd John Baxter, of the City of Worcester (suppose,) nor a Second, call'd Robert, of the Town of Bewdley ; nor a Third call'd Ralph Baxter, of the Borough of Bridport ; nor a Fourth call'd William, of the City of Exeter ; nor a Fifth call'd Walter, of the Town of Taunton-Deane,
nor

to the Reader.

nor a Sixth call'd Roger Baxter of Kingston upon Thames, and so on to Thirtiethly.—But Second and Positively; The Party you enquire of is one Richard Baxter; that Richard Baxter, who first, was never so happy as to be an Academical Graduate. (Answ. to Dr. Still. Serm. p. 47.)—who Second, was commonly derided for a Puritan when he was a Boy (Cath. Theol. Pref. p. 2.)—who Third, when he was Eighteen or Nineteen years old, had a distast kindl'd in him against the Prelates as Persecutors, Ibid. Lin. 21. 27.—who Fourth, stil'd Oliver Cromwel, (when Protector) an Officer of the Universal King (Ep. Dedic. in his 5. Disp. of Ch. Government, p. 8.)—whom Fifthly, Dr. Pierce has long since prov'd an arrant Papist in disguise by Fourteen Arguments, fram'd according to the Model of his own Arguments to prove Grotius one. (Appendix to his New Discoverer Discover'd, p. 170. to 174.)—who Sixthly, confess'd of himself Anno 1657. that his Pride needed sharper reprehensions than any his Friends had us'd about him. (Dispute of Right to the Sacraments, p. 486.) Whereas Anno 1655. this he durst say,
b *that*

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that the evidentest victory that he had against any sin (except Covetousness) was against Pride; and if he had not Conquer'd that, he had Conquer'd none. (Pref. to the Confess. of his Faith, p. 20. — *who Seventhly, many years ago in a Letter to one Doctor Hill, wrote this of himself*—I have been in the heat of my zeal, so forward to changes and ways of Blood, that I fear God will not let me have a hand in the peaceable building of his Church; (Hypocrisie Unvail'd and Jesuitism Unmask'd, in a Letter to Mr. Baxter, Printed for Mr. Royston, Anno 1662 — *Who Eighthly, Canoniz'd Brook, and White, Pym, and Hampden.* (Everlasting Rest. p. 102. Second Edit.) — *Who Ninthly, sayes that if Vanescup tell truth, when he sayes (in his Travels) that Justinian kill'd no less than 200000 men for following Dioscorus, then the Tyrannical Hereticaters are the Pikes in the Pond.* (True way of Concord, p. 273.) — *Who Tenthly, confesses he had cause to repent of the National Covenant, because it was not so simple as that which Asa made Israel enter into* 2 Chron. 15. *but contain'd something*

to the Reader.

thing Political, and controversial. (Plain Script. proof of Inf. Bapt. p. 123. (Edit. 1651.) instancing in Episcopacy, p. 121.—Who Eleventhly, in the same Book reflects on the Directory as more defective than the Common-Prayer-Book, because plain duties, (viz. the profession of Fundamentals at the time of Baptism, and engaging to be Christians, which the Common-Prayer-Book requir'd,) were wip'd out by the Directory, p. 122.—Who Twelfthly, told his Auditory in an Assize-Sermon, 1648. and in 1654. declar'd to the World in Print, that Christ had made their hearts to ake, and slain them by Thousands. Who were against the setting up his Discipline, (that Discipline which Udal stickled so seditiously for in Queen Elizabeths Reign, which was the Classsical, Presbyterian, Lay-Elder-Discipline.) His words are these, p. 191.
“How long hath England Rebell'd a-
“gainst his (Christ's) Government?
“Mr. Udal told them in the dayes of
“Queen Elizabeth, that if they would
“not set up the Discipline of Christ in the
b 2 Church,

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Which that it was the Discipline afore said, is evident from Bancroft's [Dangerous Positions] and Sutcliffe's [Answer to a Libel Supplicatory,] where the Proceedings against Udal are justify'd.

“ Church, a Christ
 “ would set it up
 “ himself in a way
 “ that would make
 “ their hearts to
 “ ake; I think, sayes
 “ he, their hearts
 “ have ak'd by this time; and as they
 “ judg'd him to the Gallows for his Predi-
 “ ctions, so hath Christ Executed them by
 “ Thousands for their Rebellion against
 “ him; and yet they are as unwilling of his
 “ Government as ever; The Kings of the
 “ Earth are afraid lest Christ's Govern-
 “ ment should un-King them; the Rulers
 “ are jealous lest it will depose them from
 “ their Dignity: Even the Reformers
 “ that have adventur'd all to set it up,
 “ (mark that, good Reader, against ano-
 “ ther time) are jealous lest it will in-
 “ croach upon their power and Priviledges;
 “ (and then again, though he had told us
 “ so but just before) Kings are afraid of it
 “ and think themselves but half Kings
 “ where Christ doth set up his word and
 “ Discipline; Parliaments are afraid of
 it

to the Reader.

“ it, lest it should Usurp their Authority; (and yet that Parliament had before made use of ill Usurpt Authority, in giving Directions for the speedy settling of the Presbyterian Government, dated August 19. 1645. And afterward June 5. 1646. came out their Ordinance for the present settling (without further delay) of the Presbyterian Government.) “ Lawyers are afraid of it, lest it should take away their gains, and the Laws of Christ should overtop the Laws of the Land; The People are afraid of it, lest it will compel them to subjection to that Law, and way which their Souls abhor. And yet this very man who talk’d thus zealously for Udal’s Lay-Elder Discipline in 1648. and Printed that talk in 1654. did yet in 1653 declare in Print against that Discipline; for in his [Christian Concord] or [Worcester-shire Agreement] Printed that year, he has these words, p. 5. “ We purposely avoid the determination of that Controversie, whether Christ hath appointed Ecclesiastical Elders, distinct in Office from teaching Elders, having no Authority to Preach, Baptize or Ad- minister the Lords Supper, though they

b 3

have

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*“ have Gifts ? I confess my own private
“ opinion is, that neither Scripture, nor
“ Antiquity did know any such Church-
“ Officers.”]*

*Which Officers notwithstanding were an
essential part of Udal's Discipline ; which
Discipline that Sermon calls Christ's, though
here the Author of that Sermon confess'd
that they are not own'd either by Scripture,
or Antiquity.*

This is Richard Baxter — Who Thirtiethly—— and so on to Nine and Thirtiethly—and then—who Fortiethly (and lastly) being [the Usurping Pastor of Kederminster in Worcester-shire for several years together, in the late times (the Legal Incumbent being living all the while) hath there, and in other places, written almost Eighty Books, which Iliads (if all the Tautologies, and Impertinencies, and Mal-Administrations of the Power of Ratiocination, were extracted) might be cram'd into a Nutshel. (If I should say, into the Nutshel of Eight sans following Cypher, I should provoke his Splzen too much, and therefore I'll recant

to the Reader.

cant that, just as he has done his [Holy Common-wealth.] For great Reasons, sayes he, I have since (1549) desir'd that that Book be taken as Non-scriptus.

**And so do I (though not for any great Reasons, I confess,) desire that that word may be look'd upon as Non-dictum.)*

*Preface to his
Second Plea for
Peace, p. 10.

Now if this last be not of it self a sufficiently discriminating Character of this Mr. Baxter, from all other Mr. Baxters in England, I am mightily mistaken. And then, good Mr. Respondent, what needed the other Thirty Nine? Even so, good Mr. Baxter, if Dr. Stillingfleet hath plainly told us what he means by [Mischievous Separation] in Three or Four Lines, as he hath, why are you so angry with him, for not putting himself to the unnecessary, and Impertinent trouble of Three or Four Leaves to that end? Or of heaping up Thirty Instances as you have done here (p. 48.) Additional to those Thirty, and those Forty you had mention'd in your Plea for Peace,) to tell us what you mean by [Dangerous Separation?] p. 58.

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But why do I ask this Question of him now, when he has already suggested the probable reason of it in that p. 48. where he tells us that [he was Born with a Disease (if it be such) that hates confusion and deceit, and inclines him to bring things into Light, and to discern between things that differ.] This distinguishing humour was it seems connate with him, and if it be a Vice, 'tis part of his Original sin, and then no wonder if he cannot help it. But whether it prove a Vice, or a Virtue, 'tis evident he has very industriously nourish'd and cherish'd it in the whole course of his Life.

He has lately given us a very pregnant demonstration how diligently he hath Study'd the distinguishing School-men in his [Catholick Theology ;] especially the first part, where the Text is very Learnedly replenish'd with Metaphysical Notions, and Niceties ; and the Margin with Quotations out of the Schoolmen, and their various opinions and Speculations ; and yet those he calls [Pacifying Principles, Collected from the Common Notions of Nature, the certain Oracles of God in the Holy Scripture, and the common consent of Christians,

to the Reader.

Christians, (*in the Title Page to the first Book.*) *And in the General Title Page, he represents it as not only pure, and peaceable, but also as [Plain] Theology.*

He's a man of such subtil, Scholastical, Metaphysical attainments, that when I contemplate him dress'd up in all his splendid habiliments of that kind, methinks he looks of all the World like Don Graculo in H. More's Philosophical Poems.

———— In whose Head were writ
More trimly than the *Iliads* of Yore,
The Laws of Mood and Figure, and many
Precepts more.

All the nice Questions of the School-
men old,
And subtilties as thin as Cobwebs bet,
Which he wore thinner in his thoughts
is told,
And his warm Brains, they say, were clo-
ser set, (net,
With sharp distinctions than a Cushio-
With Pins, and Needles, which he can
shoot out
Like angry *Porcupine* where e're they hit.
Certes a doughty Clerk, and Champion
flout He

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He seem'd, and well appointed against every doubt.

The truth is, he has so indefatigably, and successfully studied the Art of distinguishing and dividing that he has long since got the knack of dividing, and splitting himself, and making one half of himself to say one thing, and the other half the quite contrary; (either expressly, or else by genuine consequence.) (A Metaphor which has been very happily started, and ingeniously pursu'd by the truly Loyal L'Estrange.) With the Left hand he writes, Tea; with the Right hand, No: Et sic vicissim; as he's either prompted by his own humour, or tempted by other mens opposition, or the Exigency of the Subject he has in hand; whereof I shall sub-joyn a few Instances as to that which he has made the quarrel between himself and the Church of England, and the order establisht in it by Law.

Some of Mr. Baxter's LEFT-HANDED
Axiomes and Sayings.

- I. **N**O Power can by any Law, Mandate,
" Choise, Ordination, Institution,
Impo-

to the Reader.

“ *Imposition, or other Act make any man a*
“ *real Pastor to that People, that consent*
“ *not to the relation.* (First Plea for Peace,
p. 26.)

2. “ *Neither dwelling in the Parish, nor*
“ *the Law of the Land makes any Christian*
“ *a Member of that Parish Church without,*
“ *or before his own Consent,* Ibid. p. 31.

3. “ *God hath laid mens Salvation or*
“ *Damnation on the choise, or refusal of*
“ *their Wills. Therefore no man can be the*
“ *Bishop or Pastor of a Church, either de*
“ *Jure, or truly de Facto, against the*
“ *Church or Peoples will, or without their*
“ *consent,* Ibid. p. 25.

4. “ *It's no Schism to disobey Pastors,*
“ *impos'd without the Election, or consent*
“ *of the People,* Ibid. p. 80.

Some of Mr. Baxter's RIGHT-HANDED
Axiomes and Sayings.

1. **W**hen a Peoples Ignorance, Faction,
“ *or willfulness, makes them re-*
“ *fuse all that are truly fit (to be their Pa-*
“ *stors,) Princes, or Patrons, may urge*
“ *them to accept the best, and may possess*
“ *such of the Temples, and publick main-*
“ *tainance,*

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*"tainance, and make it consequently to be-
"come the Peoples duty to consent, Ib.p.33.*

2. *"If men are no Church, but uncall'd
"Persons, and it be not a Pastor of a Church,
"but a Preacher to Convert men, and fit
"them for a Church-State that is to be
"settled, then may the Magistrate settle
"such a man, and force the people to hear
"him Preach. Dispute of Church-Gov-
"ernment, p. 257. (As if God had not
"laid those mens Salvation also, or Damna-
"tion, on the choise of thir Wills.)*

3. *"The Church is bound to take many a
"man as a true Minister to them, and re-
"ceive the Ordinances from him in Faith,
"and expectation of a Blessing, upon pro-
"mise, who yet before God is a sinful Inva-
"der, an Usurper of the Ministry, and
"shall be condemn'd for it, Ibid. p. 131.*

*(Ergo, It may be Schism to disobey such a
"Minister.)*

4. *"Doubtless the Magistrate himself
"hath so much Authority in Ecclesiastical
"Affaires, that if he command a qualify'd
"Person to Preach the Gospel, and com-
"mand the People to receive him, I see
"not how either of them can be allow'd to
"disobey him, Ibid. p. 222.*

More

to the Reader.

More of his Left-handed Axiomes and Sayings.

5. *“ Church-History hath constrain’d all
“ that understand it, to confess that the
“ Ordination of Bishops and Presbyters, was
“ in the Power of the Bishops, and the Ele-
“ ction in the Power of the People ; not
“ only the first Three hundred years under
“ Heathen Emperours, but for many hun-
“ dred years after, under Christian Em-
“ perours and Princes. 2. That this was
“ taken for their right given them by God--
“ many Papists largely prove it ; as doth
“ David Blondel beyond exception. De
“ jure plebis in Regem Ecclesiastico.*

*(By the way, I pray thee, Reader, don’t
believe him without consulting that Tract
of David Blondel, and then believe him if
thou can’st. In my apprehension he’s so far
from proving it their right beyond ex-
ception, that never (that I know of) was
Scripture more ridiculously abus’d to prove
any thing, than ’tis by him to prove that
the People ought to have a share in the Go-
vernment of the Church, See p. 15. to 20.
(in 8°. Hagæ-Com. 1652.) And as to
the Practise, read p. 44. and 48. and then
tell*

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tell me whether he does not there acknowledge, or rather complain that that Practise continu'd not beyond the Fourth Century.)

6. *"In my Abridgment of Church-History, I have cited many Canons which
"prove it the Common Judgment of the
"Church for a Thousand years or near, that
"he was no Bishop that was not chosen by
"the Clergy and the People; or came in
"without the Peoples consent, (Answ. to
Dr. Stillingfl. p. 51.)*

(By the same token that p. 336. of that Abridgment, (where there's some such thing out of Platina, as to the Roman Clergy and People, in the choise of a Pope) he Translates Episcopum Placentinum, Bishop of Placentine; just as if a man should Translate Concilium Tridentinum, the Council of Tridentine; or Electorem Moguntinum, the Elector of Moguntine; but I presume he'll shortly hear of that History on both Eares.)

7. *"I insist on this; you go against all
"the Antient Fathers and Churches for
"many hundred years, (when you will not
"let the People choose their own Pastor,)
Answ. to Dr. Stillingfl. p. 16. and p. 18.
"Councils, Doctors, and the Universal
Church*

to the Reader.

*“ Church thought otherwise, and abhor’d
“ this Doctrine, (viz. that ’tis unlawful
“ for any to assemble for the publick Wor-
“ ship of God against Law.)*

More of his Right-handed Sayings.

5. *“ If any Father or Historian tell me
“ that that was deliver’d by the Apostles as
“ a Law to the Universal Church, which is
“ not contain’d in Scripture, nor to be
“ prov’d by it, I will not believe them ;—
“ If it were prov’d that the Apostles did
“ de facto thus, or thus, dispose of a cir-
“ cumstance of Government, or Worship,
“ which yet is undetermin’d in Scripture, I
“ take it not for a sufficient proof, that they
“ intended that Fact for an Universal
“ Law, or that they meant to bind all the
“ Churches in all Ages to do the like. Ad-
vertisement (before his Dispute of
Church-Government,) p. 8. which ex-
ceptions were design’d by him to shake off the
proofes that some count strong, for the Uni-
versal Obligation of the Church to Dioce-
sans, or Metropolitans, p. 9.)*

*(And yet I suppose that he will not deny
that the right of Diocefans and Metropoli-
tans*

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- *tans to Govern the Church, is much more firmly rooted and establisb'd in the Ecclesiastical Canons, than the Peoples right to chuse every Bishop.)*

6. " *As for them that pretend humane Laws for their Form of Government, I answer : 1. I disown, and deny all humane Laws as obligatory to the Church Universal. 2. And for General Councils, there have been no such things, nor any thing like them (since Scripture-time at least) I know therefore no humane, universal Laws, whether it be for Forms of Government, or any thing else, Ibid. p. 11, 12.*

(Why then does he insist on Fathers and Councils, to prove the Peoples (pretended) right to the Election of Pastors?)

More of his Left-handed Axiomes.

8. " *On just cause to pull down Churches and alienate the Church-goods is no Sacrilege, nor to silence an intolerable Teacher ; but to silence Ministers unjustly is another matter.*

" *If men will Cant over still, who shall be Judge? We still repeat, 1. whoever is Judge,*

to the Reader.

*" Judge, he hath no power to cast out faith-
ful Ministers; and if he mis-Judge them,
it justifies not his Act; and every man is
the discerning Judge of his own duty.
Answer to Dr. Stillingsfleet, p. 20.*

9. *" If my Money, or Limbs, or Life,
be not at the Patrons or Princes will,
much less my Soul; he is trusted with
my Estate and Life, but I am first, and
more trusted with them; he may keep out
ill Physicians from the Land, and encour-
age the good, but he hath no power to
tye me to an ill Physician, nor to ill Ser-
vants, the choise of these belongeth to my
self; much less can he on pretence of Pa-
rish-Order, tye me to an Ignorant, Drun-
ken, Malignant, or an unexperient'd,
Sapless Teacher——No man is so much
concern'd as my self what becometh of me
for ever, and I will not believe that the
Patron loveth me and all the Parish bet-
ter than we love our selves, Ibid. p. 16.
(Is this Reasoning, or Canting?)*

More of his Right-handed Axiomes.

7. *" Who shall be encourag'd, or allow'd,
publickly to Preach without disturbance?
c of*

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"of this the Magistrate is the Judge, (Worcester-shire Agreement, p. 85.) where it follows; "of the business of Election, "see Grotius very right De Imperio summ. "Poteft. c. 10. especially p. 239. (329. 'tis "in the Hague-Edition, 1652.) (Ay, Reader, see him with all my heart, and peruse that whole Chapter; and then judge whether there are not divers other passages in it, as much to the confusion of this mans confident talk about the Peoples Right, as that which he here cites, wherein though Grotius would have that Right allow'd them, yet he would not have it allow'd them in contradiction to the Supreme civil Power, but with a Liberty reserv'd for that Power to null the Peoples Election, in case they choose a Pastor to the prejudice either of Church or State. Adibita, says he, hac cautione, nè Plebi invitæ Pastor obtrudatur, & simul salvo summis Potestatibus jure rescindendi Electiones, si quid fortè in Ecclesiæ, aut Reipublicæ, perniciem erratum sit.)

8. *"The necessary means of Unity, and "Church-Concord are these— 2. That in "Church-cases, and Religion—The Magistrate have the only publick judgment whom*

to the Reader.

“whom he shall countenance and maintain,
“or Tolerate — That where Parish-
“Bounds are judg’d necessary, all Persons
“living in the Parish be constrain’d—to
“hear Publick Teaching, and to Worship
“God, either in that, or some other ap-
“prov’d or Tolerated Church, within their
“convenient reach or Neighbor-hood, (The
true way of Concord, Part 3. p. 139,
140, 141.)

9. “Some may object that tying our
“selves to the Observation of Parish
“Bounds, and one Minister not to receive
“Members from anothers Congregation,
“doth hinder the free gathering of Churches
“and may force a man to submit to a
“weak Minister, when he might have a
“better.

Ans. 1. “Brethren! would you have
“Unity and Peace, or No? If you would,
“must not you condescend as far as may be
“to others, as well as others to you? Let
“it be the property of the Pope, to accept
“of no Peace with any Church that will not
“wholly come up to his Will and Way. And
“you know that this is the great point
“which you must yield in, or you cannot
“have Union with the contrary-minded.

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“ —2. Did you ever read in Scripture,
“ that those were Members of a Church in
“ one City, who liv’d constantly in another
“ City that had a Church? Shew me where?
“ Yea, or that ever any were Members of one
“ Church, that liv’d among the Members
“ of another Church? Shew me that if you
“ can. — 4. Is it not fit that Bounds for
“ Order and Division should be set? And
“ may not the Magistrate do it? And is it
“ not done in most places as well as you can
“ desire? And where it is not, but Pa-
“ rishes are either too great or too small, get
“ them amended as soon as you can. In the
“ mean time affect not confusion; turn not
“ all Order up side down; God is not the
“ God of Confusion, but of Order, which
“ he would have establish’d in all the
“ Churches. (This, I confess, is somewhat
like a Pleader for Peace.)

[Worcester-shire Agreement. p. 34,
35.] In which last Page there are also these
Words. “ If any particular Persons living
“ in one Parish, would be Members of the
“ Church in another, we have agreed to ex-
“ amine the Case—and if the Person have
“ no sufficient cause (for his desire) yet by
“ consent of the Ministers of both Churches,
me

to the Reader.

“ we deny not but such a Case may be dis-
“ pens’d with; (as if a man say, I can pro-
fit more by a Neighbour-Minister) (where
he grants that the pretence of greater Edifi-
cation, is no sufficient cause for him who
lives in one Parish, to desire to be admit-
ted Member of the Church in another Pa-
rish.) See much more there to the same
(good) purpose. Amongst other passages,
these, p. 37. “ Christians should not first
“ ask, [where may I have the best Mini-
“ ster, or Company, or purest Ordinances?
“ Or where may I receive most good?] but
“ they must first ask [where lyeth my Duty?
“ and where may I do most good?] and p. 36.
“ God hath more means than Ministerial
“ abilities to increase mens Graces; He
“ that keeps in Gods Order, under a
“ meaner, honest, Minister, is like to
“ be a more humble, thriving Christian,
“ than he that will break that Order,
“ under pretence of Edification. (These
are dictates that become a good Subject, and a
good Christian, and a judicious Divine; and
therefore let’s heartily give him the praise
that’s due to him for them, and as heartily
wish that he had not done so much mischief,
as ’tis to be fear’d he has by some of his
C 3 other

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other self-contradicting Propositions, and Practises.)

More of his Left-handed Axiomes and Sayings.

10. *" I believe that he that obeyeth not
" a Law which was made against Gods Law,
" or without Authority given by him, sin-
" neth not against Authority. (Answer to
Dr. Stillingfleet. p. 20.)*

11. *" When humane Laws—are made
" by Usurpation, without Authority thereto,
" they bind not to formal obedience in that
" particular. (First Plea for Peace. p. 32.)*

More of his Right-handed Axiomes and Dictates.

10. *" If Rulers shall break that Law of
" the Spirit of God. Rom. 14. 1, and shall
" make such Impositions of things Indiffe-
" rent as are there forbidden them. 1. Sub-
" jects must obey them, and take them as no
" longer indifferent to them, but a necessary
" duty because their Governours have taken
" away their Liberty. Obj. But how can
" any man take away the Liberty that God
hath*

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*“ hath given us ? A. Though he cannot
“ do it without sin, he may do it so far as
“ that you shall be oblig’d to obedience ; a
“ Judge cannot against right adjudge any
“ part of your Possessions to another without
“ sin ; but if he do it, though sinfully, you
“ must not break order, nor re-assume your
“ own. And it is to be noted that your
“ Gift of Liberty is the consequent of the
“ Rulers duty, who is here (Rom. 14.) re-
“ quir’d to use you with this tenderness, and
“ if he performeth not that duty, there
“ wanteth the hand that should reach out
“ this Gift unto you, so that you had a di-
“ stant Jus ad Rem but no Jus in Re.
(Second Plea for Peace. p. 171.)*

*Reader I beseech thee observe well and
circumspectly this Note of his ; for being
dexterously manag’d and improv’d, ’twill
be an Antidote against another of his Left-
handed Aphorisms, which runs thus.*

*12. “ If Bishops would ordain Presbyters
“ by limiting words restraining them from
“ any essential or integral part of the Office,
“ or Power, as Instituted by Christ, and yet
“ profess that they ordain them to the office
“ which Christ hath Instituted, it’s no
“ Schism for those Presbyters afterwards to
claim*

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*“ claim, and execute in season all the power
“ which by Christ’s Institution belongs to
“ their Office, though against the Bishops
“ wills ; because the Bishops are not the
“ Authors or Donors of the Office-power, but
“ only the Ministerial Deliverers and In-
vesters. (First Plea for Peace. p. 54.)
(But, say I, if they did not deliver to them
and invest them in, such or such a part of
power (which he here presumes belonging to
them by Christ’s Institution) the Persons so
ordain’d, having only a distant Jus ad
Rem, but no Jus in Re, must not break
order by exercising that Gift, because the
Ordainer not performing his (here suppos’d)
duty, there wanted the hand that should
have reach’d out that power to them.)*

*There follows in that 171. p. another
Objection. viz. “ But is not a Ruler’s act
“ null, which is done against the Command
“ of God, and consequently without Autho-
“ rity? A. He hath a general Authority
“ in his office it self to rule you, though this
“ Text forbid him this particular Act. And
“ his sinning against this one command of
“ God, doth not nullify the Authority of his
“ Office ; and as a Subject you are bound to
“ obey him in all lawful things belonging to
his*

to the Reader.

*“ his general Office : so that if it be lawful
“ for you antecedently, it is your duty con-
“ sequently to obey, though he sin in com-
“ manding—— But remember, sayes he,
“ that all this is spoken only of things indif-
“ ferent, and not of things forbidden by God.*

*Ibid. p. 172. (Notwithstanding which,
Remember, say I, that by these Answers to
these Objections, he may sin against Autho-
rity, who obeys not a Law which was made
against Gods Law (in this Authors opinion)
and without Authority given by him.)*

*But now 'tis high time to remember, that
I am not writing a Book but a Preface, to
which (yet) I shall not put an end without
mentioning Two or Three more of his in-
consistencies with himself; which it may be
also may touch him a little more to the quick
than these already mention'd.*

*P. 17. of his Answer to Dr. Stilling-
fleet, he sayes to him, “ you flatly deny, or
“ shun to give me an Answer to [my] case,
“ and the case of all others, that Preach
“ only in Parishes where few of the Peo-
“ ple can hear in the Church.*

*And p. 24. — I — and others are loudly
“ accus'd of Preaching — to some of many
“ thousands that cannot come into the
“ Temples ——*

And

The Preface

And yet in that p. 17. he has these words;
“ —I think (as far as I can Judge) the
“ most of [my] Hearers, I think, Ten or
“ Twenty to one, do also Hear in the Parish
“ Churches—and I believe, says he, it is so
“ with many others.

Again, p. 63. (of the same Answer) he says thus. “ I take it for a greater injury to us
“ to perswade us to silence our selves, than
“ to perswade the Magistrate only to silence,
“ Banish, or Imprison us; for so to suffer
“ from another is not our sin, but Sacrile-
“ giously to break our Ministerial Vow, and
“ forsake the calling which we were solemnly
“ Vow’d to, and this while the necessity of
“ Soules cry for help, (Remember that Ten
“ or Twenty to one of [his] Hearers Soules
“ met just now with help in the (allow’d)
“ Temples) is a sin which few men are so
“ bad as to perswade us to with open face,
without some Pious, Fraudulent pretence.

And yet this very man does in the same Pamphlet confess himself to have been a notorious sinner in the same kind, in that he hath voluntarily forsaken other parts of the Ministerial calling; for p. 80. he witnesses thus of himself—I have Baptiz’d no one
“ these Twenty years—I gave the Lords
Supper

to the Reader.

*“ Supper to none for about Eighteen years--
En jecur hominis ! Voluntarily to desert
the Preaching part of the Ministerial Office
is a heinous sin, but so to desert those other
parts is, it seems, no sin at all ; as if he
was not at his Ordination as well oblig’d to
Baptize, and Administer the Communion,
as to Preach ; as if the Souls of his Audi-
tors had no necessity of the Eucharist, and
therefore cry’d for no help of that kind,
What (I wonder) was the Pious, Fraudu-
lent pretense, by which he was perswaded to
[this] Sacrilegious desertion? A man
would think that by his exclaiming as he
does here against Ordain’d mens silencing
themselves, and in other places, against
their passive submission to their being silenc’d
by the Magistrate, that he judg’d it utterly
unlawful for any one that’s Ordain’d to the
Office of the Ministry, either voluntarily to
suspend himself from the exercise of that
Office, or patiently to submit to his being
suspended by his Superiours. And yet p. 140.
of his True way of Concord, the Third
Part, he grants that Pastors may in case
of Forfeiture, or just cause, be remov’d
(not only from their particular Churches,
but also) from the Sacred Office. Now,
say*

The Preface

say I, if they may be justly remov'd from it, they ought not to exercise it when so remov'd; and in his First Plea for Peace, p. 97. Having deny'd that Magistrates have power to silence Ministers causelessly, or to punish them for Preaching the word when causelessly silenc'd; "In this case, "sayes he, our consciences would not be "bound; though still we profess that God's "Law bindeth us not to Rebel, or take up "Armes against their injuries but patiently "to bear them—and afterwards, such a "Preachers conscience is not formally bound "by that Prohibition, though he must still "keep his Loyalty and Subjection, and his "care of the Publick Peace and Wellfare. Strange Doctrine this from that man's Pen who Preaches ordinarily, and openly, in defiance of that Law that forbids him! Is this to bear the injury of (as he fancies it) a causeless silencing, patiently? Is this to keep his Loyalty and Subjection, and to act like a man that had any care of, or concern for the Publick Peace and Wellfare? Or rather like a man who, if the Patrons of the Good Old Cause were so reviv'd as to be again the Higher Powers (he knows what I mean) would joyn with them in defending and Protecting

to the Reader.

testing the Divine Authority, he pretends to for Preaching the Gospel, by force of Armes? And who cannot choose but suspect this who considers his Worldly zeal against that which he calls [Sacrilegious Desertion] and the Publick, Pertinacious, and Seditious opposition he now makes against Legal Establishments, meerly (as he pretends) to preserve himself from contracting that Guilt? And who (withall) remembers, and considers that heap of Trayterous Insinuations which is to be met with in his Key for Catholicks, (p. 324, 325.) as things which may be alledg'd in justification of those Patrons; and those words which are to be found in his Holy Common-wealth, p. 441. where he sayes, [It is either confusion and ignorance of the State of the Question, or palpable error in them that maintain that 'tis unlawful to fight for Religion; It is one thing to fight to make others Religious, (this it seems is unlawful) and another thing to fight to preserve our own Religion, and to preserve the means of Religion (the exercise of his Preaching Office) to us and the Nation, and our Posterity.] This it seems is lawful.

But

The Preface

But now, what wilt thou say, Reader, if I make it out also, that notwithstanding all his fury against mens [Voluntary] suspending themselves, from the exercise of their Preaching Office, yet he himself has heretofore allow'd of it, as that which in some cases is just and requisite to be done?

'Tis certain that in the late times, when the Reines of Government were in his own hands (as 'twere,) as to the Parish of Kederminster, and Diocess of Worcester, Non-preaching Elders, and yet the same Elders ordain'd to the Office of Preaching, were a part of that Model of Government, which he presented to the World, as agreed upon by the Ministers of the County of Worcester and some adjacent parts. For in his [Worcester-shire Agreement] (Printed 1653.) the Seventeenth Proposition (so agreed upon) runs thus. It
“ having been the custom of the Church in
“ the Apostles dayes, to have ordinarily
“ many Officers in a Church—we judge
“ it needful to use all lawful means to procure more Ministers or Elders, than one
“ in each Church, even proportionable to the
“ number of Souls, and greatness of the
“ work; and if for want of men, or maintenance,

to the Reader.

“tainance, there cannot Learned men be
“obtain’d, we judge it fit to take the assi-
“stance of Sober, Orthodox, judicious Per-
“sons of competent ability for private in-
“struction, and over-sight, and ordain’d
“to this work, though defective in Lear-
“ning, and less able Publickly to Teach,
“and [who may leave Publick Speaking to
“him that is more able, and do the more of
“the less Publick work. — And as long as
“we agree that these Elders are [Ordain’d
“Church-Officers,] and what shall be
“their work, there needs to be no breach
“among us, though we determin’d not of
“their Power in Sacraments.

And (Dispute of Church-Government,
p. 315.) “There are, sayes he, few Con-
“gregations, I hope, of Godly People, but
“have some private men in them, that are
“fit to be Ordain’d Assistant Presbyters.
“ — Such as are able to Exhort Publickly
“in a case of need. He that would imitate
“the Example of the Primitive Church,
“(at least in the Second Century) should
“Ordain such as these to be some of them
“Assistant Elders, — and let them not
“Teach Publickly, when a more Learned,
“able Pastor is at hand to do it, but let
them

The Preface

*“ them assist him in what they are fittest to
“ perform. Yet let them not be Lay Elders,
“ but Authoriz’d to all Pastoral Admini-
“ strations, and of one and the same Office
“ with the Pastor—The Parts of many
“ very able Christians are too much buried
“ and lost, as to the Church, for want of
“ being drawn into more Publick use—And
“ yet few of these are fit to be trusted with
“ the Preaching of the word, or guiding of
“ a Church alone, no nor in equality with
“ others; for they would either corrupt the
“ Doctrine, or divide the Church. (And
yet he thinks fit that such Ignorant, and in-
sufficient Persons should be Ordain’d to the
whole Ministerial Office, the Office of Preach-
ing, and guiding, as well as privately in-
structing.) —But under the Inspection,
“ and direction of a more Learned and Ju-
“ dicious man, as his Assistants, doing no-
“ thing against his mind, they might be
“ very Serviceable to some Churches. And
“ such a Bishop with such a Presbytery, and
“ Deacons (neither Lay—nor usually very
“ Learned,) were, sayes he, the ancient
“ fix’d Governours of the Churches, if I can
“ understand Antiquity.*

From

to the Reader.

From these passages (which are also contrariant to several other pretensions of his) I suppose it evident to every understanding Reader, that Mr. Baxter is of opinion, (or at least was, when he wrote and Printed them,) that for men voluntarily to consent to the suspending themselves from the exercise of the Preaching Office, though they are Persons Ordain'd to it, is in some cases, a thing just and requisite to be done, yea, and always when the Ordain'd Persons are so Scandalously insufficient, that if they should exercise that part of the office, they would either corrupt the true Doctrine, or divide the Church, and consequently that so to do, is no Sacrilegious desertion of the calling, or breach of their Ministerial Vow; especially if the necessity of Souls cry not for their help, which is the very case of this Mr. Baxter (as to the far greater number of the Souls under his Preaching care) by his own Confession; for he confesses that he thinks Ten or Twenty to one of his Hearers, do also hear in the Parish-Churches.

*And now—Qui tantas valeat componere
lites?*

The Preface

It may be at this dead Lift, this R. B. will address himself to the ingenious T. P. for help and succour, as imagining that he (sure) has both wit enough to reconcile all these Enantiophanies, and good nature enough to make use of his wit to that end: But I would advise him as a Friend, not to hope for relief from him on either of these accounts. 1. Because himself has so little Wit (in his Epistle Dedicatory, before [The Mischief of Impositions] p. 16.) as to assign this (only) as the Reason why he thinks that doubtful things are Impos'd (on all that will be Conformists) for certain, and False for True, because in the Catechism of the Church—this Doctrine “is contain'd, that Infants perform Faith “and Repentance by their Sureties; and “such Repentance too whereby they forsake “sin, and such Faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to “them in that Sacrament. Which is a false Story, for the Catechism says only that Infants [Promise] (to Repent and Believe) by their Sureties. Which Promise [when they come to Age,] themselves are bound to perform.—2. Because he has so little good Nature p. 6. as

to the Reader.

*to make this motion—Leave the Dissen-
“ters quietly to overthrow themselves by
“their own bad Principles, and so shall the
“Church of England avoid the Odium of
“Persecution—and the Separators as Fe-
“lones de se, shall be condemn’d to have
“a Stake driven through them, who like
“the Foolish Woman, pluck’d down their
“own House upon their own heads, with
“their own hands. Give them but respite
“from outward fury, and commit them to
“be crumbl’d to nothing by the inconsisten-
“cy of their own Principles, and they must
“lay upon themselves, not the Church, the
“Guilt of their own destruction.*

*Now if that T. P. will not out of
Pity and Compassion to his Dissenting
Brother Mr. Baxter, recant this motion,
for ought I see this Self-splitter will be
Sentenc’d by him, to be first stak’d as a
Self-murderer, and then crumbl’d into
nothing.*

*And if that be true which he long since
told the World in that Assize-Sermon,
That Mr. Udal was adjudg’d to the Gallows
for his (before-mention’d) Predictions, I*

to the Reader.

am afraid if himself had liv'd in Queen Elizabeth's dayes, his Neck had been in the same danger for several Passages, of the same kind, in his [Moral Prognostication.]

Majesty

MAJESTY in MISERY:

O R,

An Imploration to the King of Kings.

Written by His late Majesty King CHARLES
the First of Blessed Memory, during his
Captivity at *Carisbrooke* Castle,
Anno Dom. 1648.

- (Power springs
1 GREAT Monarch of the World, from whose
The Potency and Power of Kings,
Record the Royal Woe, my Sufferings sing;
- 2 And teach my tongue, that ever did confine
Its faculties, in Truths Seraphick Line
To Traçt the Treasons of thy Foes and mine.
- 3 Nature and Law, by thy Divine Decree
(The only Root of Righteous Royalty)
With this dim Diadem invested me,
- 4 With it, the Sacred Scepter, Purple Robe,
The Holy Unction, and the Royal Globe:
Yet am I level'd with the life of Job.

The

The Imploration,

- 5 *The fiercest Furies, that do daily tread
Upon my Grief, my Gray Dis-crowned head,
Are those, that owe my Bounty for their Bread.*
- 6 *They raise a War, and Christen it, The Cause,
Whilst Sacrilegious hands have best applause,
Plunder, and Murder, are the Kingdoms Laws.*
- 7 *Tyranny bears the Title of Taxation,
Revenge and Robbery are Reformation,
Oppression gains the name of Sequestration.*
- 8 *My Loyal Subjects who in this bad Season
Attend me (by the Law of God and Reason)
They dare impeach, and punish for High Treason.*
- 9 *Next at the Clergy, do their Furies frown,
Pious Episcopacy must go down,
They will destroy the Crozier and the Crown.*
- 10 *Church-men are chain'd, and Schismatics are
Mechanicks Preach, and Holy Fathers Bleed,
The Crown is Crucified with the Creed.*
- 11 *The Church of England doth all Faction foster,
The Pulpit is usurpt by each Impostor,
Ex tempore, excludes the Pater Noster.*
- 12 *The Presbyter and Independant Seed (bleed,
Springs with broad-blades; to make Religion
Herod, and Pontius Pilate are agreed.*

13 *The*

The Imploration.

- 13 *The Corner Stone's misplac't by every Pavier;
With such a bloody method, and behaviour,
Their Ancestors did Crucifie our Saviour.*
- 14 *My Royal Consort, from whose Fruitful Womb
So many Princes legally have come,
Is forc't in Pilgrimage to seek a Tomb.*
- 15 *Great Britains Heir is forced into France,
Whilest on his Father's head, his Foes advance,
Poor Child! He weeps out his Inheritance.*
- 16 *With my own Power, my Majesty they wound;
In the King's Name, the King himself's uncrown'd:
So doth the dust, destroy the Diamond.*
- 17 *With Propositions dayly they enchaunt
My Peoples eares, such as do Reason daunt,
And the Almighty will not let me Grant.*
- 18 *They promise, to erect my Royal Stem,
To make me Great, t'advance my Diadem,
If I will first fall down, and Worship them;*
- 19 *But for refusal they devour my Thrones,
Distress my Children, and destroy my bones,
I fear they'l force me, to make bread of stones.*
- 20 *My Life they prize at such a slender rate,
That in my absence, they draw Bills of hate,
To prove the King a Traytor to the State.*

The Imploration.

- 21 Felons obtain more priviledge than I,
They are allow'd to answer, e're they dye,
'Tis death for Me, to ask the Reason, Why.
- 22 But Sacred Saviour, with thy words I woo
Thee to forgive, and not be bitter to
Such, as thou know'st do not know what they do,
- 23 For since they from their Lord are so disjointed,
As to contemn those Ediçts be appointed,
How can they prize the Power of his Anointed?
- 24 Augment my Patience, nullifie my hate,
Preserve my Issue, and inspire my Mate,
Yet, tho We perish, bleſs this Church and State.

Bona agere, & mala pati Regium est.

*Alii diutius Imperium tenuerunt,
Nemo tam fortiter reliquit, Tacit. Hist. lib. 1*

CONSIDERATIONS

Concerning

Comprehension, Toleration,

AND THE

Renouncing the COVENANT.

HE who endeavours to make any Alteration in a settled Government either of Church or State, is obliged by all the Rules of Justice and of Prudence to alledge some very good cause, why it is that he doth do so; Alteration being in it self so great an Inconvenience, as that it ought not by any means to be attempted, but for some weighty Reason.

How little Cause our Dissenters have, either for Separation or Alteration.

NOW as to the Church, as it is by Law established (notwithstanding all the fearful Outcries which of late have been made against it) I would fain have any of our Dissenting Brethren to answer directly, Whether there be any one thing sinful in her Communion, or onely some things (as they conceive) inexpedient? If onely
B
inexp.

2 *Pleas for Toleration Discussed.*

inexpedient (as there is good cause to believe, that the most considerable Persons, and those in no small numbers among them, do suppose no more) then I would fain know, whether inexpediency alone is a sufficient and just cause of Separation? And how well soever any particular man among them may think of the Grounds of his own Separation; there is very good evidence, that there are abundance among themselves who do plainly perceive, and much lament it, that by the means of this present Separation, there hath been an entrance made for such Doctrines and Practices into this Nation, which are chargeable with (to phrase it modestly) the very highest degrees of inexpediency. When the rule and measures of inexpediency are well considered of, and regard is had to that great variety of Respects in which one and the same thing may be both expedient and inexpedient; it will then be found, that inexpediency is a thing, which private persons cannot easily determine, indeed are no competent Judges of: Besides if it were a clear case, that in the present settlement there were something not altogether so expedient as were to be wished: Is this a sufficient warrant for any not onely to dislike so much of the Law as they think capable of being mended, but withall openly and avowedly to separate, to unite and joyn in great Combinations against the Publick Constitutions, onely because they are not arrived, in their esteem, at all possible degrees of perfection? He who
can

can submit to no Law but such a one as is exactly made to his own mind in all particulars, must resolve, for any thing I know, never to obey, as long as he lives, any Law which is not of his own making; and not only so, but he will find that he must not obey many Laws of his own making for any long time neither: If therefore a supposed inexpediency be the utmost of the charge, as I suppose in the end it will appear to be, then all wise men should consider with themselves, Whether any fancied Alteration can be secure from equal, if not greater dangers? And before that any such Alteration be made, it seems to be but just and equal that the New Model be agreed upon by those who do design it, and that it be proposed either to our Governours, or to the publick view, that it may be examined, before admitted; and seeing that it is to be of lasting Consequence, it is to be hoped that it will not be too hastily concluded upon.

An Account of the Design of a Book Entitled, Of the Religion of England.

A Late ingenious Person set forth an handsome Discourse upon this Argument, entitled, *Of the Religion of England, asserting, that Reformed Christianity settled in its due Latitude is the Stability and Advancement of this Kingdom.* Wherein he hath attempted something like a Model of a future Settlement; his

4 *Pleas for Toleration Discussed.*

Discourse is plausible, and desires seem to be bent on Peace, and many of his Principles look as if they did seem to tend much that way, but there seems to be this one thing very observable in his whole way of Writing, that with great Art he doth very dextrously take care not to come too close up to the Argument, and he brings his Reader even to the very Point where the business lies, and almost unperceivably steals by and passeth on to something else; and to a narrow view it will appear plainly, that he keeps himself within the compass of such wide Generalities, that he leaves the Reader in the same uncertainties in which he found him. The Draught of his Design is to be seen, *Seçt. 14. pag. 28.* which doth consist in these three Contrivances. First, *That there is to be an established and approved Order:* But, because that this alone he finds not to be sufficient; therefore in the second place, there is to be a Provision for a sort of men who cannot come within the establishment, and *they are to be tolerated under certain Restrictions:* Nor is this all; for neither the establishment, alone is sufficient, neither will a Toleration of Dissenters from it suffice; and therefore in the third place, there are another sort of men, *who must be only connived at.* Each of these Particulars are afterwards considered: The establishment hath the honour of the first place, and hath, as it well deserves, incomparably the greatest part of the pains bestowed upon it, and of this he tells us, *Seçt. 15. That it must not be loose and incoherent, but well*
compa-

compact'd, that it may attain the ends of Discipline, which are to promote sound Doctrine and Godly Life, and keep out Idolatry, Superstition, and all wicked error and Practice that tends to the vanquishing of the Power of Christianity: Now these things do not require a constitution of narrower bounds than things necessary to Christian Faith and Life, and godly Order in the Church,

Now is it not very plain, that such a Comprehension as is here prescribed, that it shall be enabled to attain all these great and publick ends here provided for, hath left no place for Toleration or connivance? and accordingly both those things are hudled together, and in a very few words dispatched, *Señ. 18. pag. 38.* I shall lay them down and leave the Reader to judge upon them: *As for others that are of sound Belief and good Life, yet have taken in some Principles less congruous to National Settlement, I would never be a means of exposing them to oppression, Contempt and Hatred, but would admit their Plea as far as it will go, &c. Nevertheless, their Liberty pleaded for is not to be inordinate but measured and limited by the safety of true Religion in general, and of the publick and established Order, &c.*

The Design of it inconsistent and unpracticable.

ANd now I shall take leave to desire those Persons, who cannot come within the Comprehension, to consider with themselves,
B 3 how

6 *Pleas for Toleration Discussed.*

how very little they are beholding to this their Advocate; he hath not in the least intimated to us what kind of Principles those are which he would have connived at, as *being onely left congruous to a National Settlement*; nor given us any manner of mark whereby to know them: Besides, whatever Favour he doth intend for these dissenting Brethren, he hath so clogged it with many Qualifications and Limitations, that he hath rendered it so plainly useless, that I much doubt whether he did ever really intend them any favour at all. First, *They must be of sound Belief and good Life*, Secondly, *Their Plea must be admitted as far as it will go*; Now how far that is he hath not told us: Thirdly, *Their Liberty must not be inordinate*, but must have two measures; First, *The safety of Religion in general*: Secondly, *The safety of the publick established Order*. Upon these terms and upon the whole matter, I think, that it is no easier a thing to understand the Nature and Bounds of that Settlement which our Author is here designing, by the placing of several sorts of men in the three Ranks of, First, an establishment; Secondly, a Toleration; and thirdly, a Connivance, with this Reason, for the two latter; For if God hath received them; why should their fellow-servants reject or afflict them causelessly? Every true Christian should be tender of all that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity; I understand, I say, as little by all this, what those particulars are which he would have from us, as if he had contented himself with Mr. Sterry's three forms
of

of believers ; and methinks the one Harangue is as edifying and intelligible as the other : *Let us receive one another into the Glory of God, as Christ receiveth us, though that cloathing of the outward form be not on the same fashion in all, nor on some so well shaped as on others, to the proportion of the Body, which is Christ. The Lord Jesus hath his Concubines, his Queens, his Virgins ; Saints in remoter forms, Saints in higher forms, Saints unmarried to any Form, who keep themselves single for the immediate embraces of their Love, in his Epistle before England's Deliverance from the Northern Presbytery.*

Now in these two Gentlemen of very differing Dispensations, there are three sorts of People proposed to our Care, and it is not unlikely that they may be suited each to one another : But this one thing is remarkable in that Discourse of Mr. Sterry, that the Presbyterians can, at the very best, hope for no higher Rank than that of Christ's Concubines, as being according to the tenor of that Sermon, if at all Saints, at the very best, Saints in the remoter Forms. The more moderate sort of Independents may indeed by him be accounted Queens, as being *Saints in higher forms*, but for Christ's Virgins, *who are unmarried to any form, and keep themselves single for the immediate embraces of their love* ; I cannot imagine who these should be, unless those Saints who are above Ordinances : And for my own part, I must freely profess, that for all the account which our Author hath given us of his three Contrivances of Com-

8 *Pleas for Toleration Discussed.*

prehension, Toleration and Connivance, I cannot at all perceive but that Mr *Sterry's* way of sorting out the several Ranks of Saints, doth well suit with, and is proportioned to it: And here let any sober man judge, whether the Settlement pretended for in the first of these three Proposals be not absolutely unsettled again in the two other.

But in the next place I must go on to consider a Pretence, much oftner supposed than owned, and that is this; Suppose that the Terms of the Communion of the Church are not onely inexpedient, but really sinful; if so, then I shall readily grant, that the Church ought not to be communicated with, while the terms of her Communion are such. But in this part of the Argument I shall presume to say with some confidence, and I hope without offence, that however the Teachers of the separated Congregations may sometimes slyly insinuate some such Jealousies into the Heads of their unwary Hearers; yet it is not easie to find a considerable man among them, who will not be ashamed to own it publicly, or who doth himself really believe it.

The Terms of Communion, which the Church of England imposeth, are not sinful in the opinion of the most learned among the Dissenters.

NOW though this Assertion may seem to carry something of uncharitableness in it; because that the Separation from the Church is so avowed and pressed upon the People, as if that it were highly necessary, and that Communion with the Church was highly criminal, at least in the Opinion of the Teachers. It being a plain case that the People are wheedled into Separation, upon the account that they suppose their Teachers know it to be unlawful: Now as to this, I must needs say, it is shrewdly to be suspected, that there is in this case a very great Cheat imposed by the Preachers and the People upon one another, and by both upon the whole Nation; because that it is as often evident as there is occasion for making it so, that among the Pastors and the Flock there are not many, who in a time of Tryal approve themselves to be in good earnest; I have been credibly informed (not to say that I am able to make it good) that Mr. *Calamy* did before His Majesty, and divers Lords of the Council profess, that there was not any thing in the Constitutions of the Church to which he could not conform, were it not for the scandalizing of others; so that in his Esteem the Constitutions of the Church were in themselves Innocent,

cent, and the whole Objection against them lay in the mistakes of other men. Mr. *Tombs* the Leader of the Anabaptists, hath writ a Book to shew the lawfulness of resorting to the Publick Congregations. The Author which I before mentioned assures us in behalf of the Presbyterians, that they not onely *maintain the Doctrine of the Church of England, but likewise communicate in her Publick Worship*, in his second Discourse of the Religion of *England*, pag. 17. By which acknowledgment we may take an estimate of the Honesty of their Separation.

Nay, I shall venture to say thus much farther, that the lawfulness of joyning in the Publick Worship is understood by the Layety as well as Clergy amongst them, is evident from these three Things: First, that there are those Persons to be named, who came to Church before the Act of Oblivion, who never did since: Secondly, that immediately after the Act of Uniformity, whilst the Hopes of Toleration were very uncertain, there was a much greater Conformity both in the City of *London*, and over the whole Nation than ever hath been since: Thirdly, that I have enquired and could never learn that there was so much as one example to be given of any one of all the Patrons or Profelytes of the Conventicles who did leave the smallest Office whatever, rather than he would, in obedience to a late Act of Parliament, joyn in the Prayers and receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the Order of the Church of *England*: from which it doth appear plainly,

plainly, that in these mens esteem, either there is no sin in communicating with the Church of *England*, or else, that these Gentlemen of so extreamly tender Consciences, can deliberately commit a sin, and that when they are performing the most solemn Act of Adoration of Almighty God, and with all the shews of Devotion imaginable: And seeing that these things are so, is it not huge pitty that a settled Church, and a Church in great Reputation over all the Reformed Parts of Christendome, should be run down by a meer noise of Conscience, when it is very plain that when ever there is a real Case put, where Conscience ought to shew it self, that then no such thing appears, neither is there the least evidence that it is so much as thought upon.

There is no sinfulness objected by them as to the I. Articles.

IF there be any Objection against the present Constitution; it must be either against the Articles, the Liturgy the Canons or the Ceremonies; As to the Articles, there is scarce so much as one Objection pretended against them, farther than as they relate to the following Heads; and if there were, such an Objection could not easily be alledged by the People as a just excuse for their Non-conformity, because they are not at all concerned for to subscribe them, unless they bring upon themselves a voluntary

luntary Obligation by some Act of their own, as taking a Degree in the University: But in this Point many words are needless; for besides the Testimony of all Churches abroad, we have at home two witnesses beyond all exception to the Innocency and Honour of the Articles, even the two late celebrated Advocates, the one for Comprehension, the other for Toleration: The former assures us in the behalf of those whose Cause he pleads, that *they do receive the Doctrine of Faith contained in the Articles of Religion, pag. 2. and again pag. 22. That they heartily embrace the English Reformation established by Law, &c. and that they do assent to the Doctrine of Faith contained in the Articles of the Church of England, and worship God according to that Faith, pag. 22. The Peace Offering* doth likewise bear witness for us of that great esteem which is bore unto the Articles of the Church of England in all the Reformed Churches abroad, and withal doth assure us in behalf of the Independents at home, that as to *all which is purely doctrinal in them they do fully imbrace and constantly adhere to, &c.* And accordingly he undertakes to profess in the name of them all; *We have no new Faith to declare, no new Doctrine to teach, no private Opinion to divulge, no Point or Truth do we profess, no not one, which hath not been declared, taught, divulged and esteemed as the common Doctrine of the Church of England, ever since the Reformation, pag. 13.*

2. Nor to the Liturgy.

THUS far therefore our way is clear, that the Doctrine of the Church is sound and esteemed to be so in the Opinion of its greatest Adversaries. In the next place therefore we are to consider, whether any reasonable Plea for Separation can be drawn from any just Exception which may be taken against the Liturgy; and here there are two sorts of men to be considered: First, those who dislike all Forms of Prayer in general: Secondly, those who are only disgusted at some particular things in ours.

As to those who are against all Forms of Prayer; I believe that the number of them, among considering Persons, is not so great, as that any great regard ought to be had unto them; and this must needs be so, for a reason which can never fail; For it cannot choose but seem strangely absurd and infinitely unbecoming the great distance which is between us and Almighty God, and that great awe which we ought to bear unto him; that all the expressions of the Publick Devotion of every Congregation in the whole Nation should be left to the arbitrary, and especially the extemporary conception of each single Person, who is bold enough to venture upon the taking so much upon him. It were very strange if this Kingdom should at this day be ignorant, how very frequently Folly, Heresie, nay and Blasphemy,
hath

hath been uttered in such kind of Prayers ; and it is utterly impossible, that upon the indulgence of any such Liberty, such Extravagancies, can with any security be provided against ; And it is not unlikely that the greatest Pretenders to the highest Attainments in that way would be not a little out of Countenance ; if so be that their own Prayers were faithfully taken from their Mouths, and after some reasonable space of time, when they might be supposed to have forgot them, presented to their view. And that which renders this evil utterly intolerable, is this, that these Prayers which either really are extemporary (or else onely pretended to be so) are under that pretence recommended and regarded by the People as the onely way of praying by the Spirit ; and by that very means the ever blessed Spirit is, as far as these mens endeavours can be succesful, entituled to all the Follies, Vanity, and Weaknesses, all the Sin and Error, and even those very Blasphemies which are every day committed against him. And I think all good Christians are concerned to endeavour, that if a Liberty must be given to these Persons to go on and to abuse the People, yet however that it may be done some other way, and they not permitted to bely the Holy Ghost.

As for Forms of Prayers, the great reasonableness and even necessity of them is very apparent, and in Scripture it self there are Examples enough to be produced ; and if any man pleaseth to enter upon that argument, I no way doubt

doubt but there will be those found who will debate it with him. It shall suffice at present only to say, that our Saviour Christ did compose a Form of Prayer, and gave it to his Disciples to use : Now if, as great numbers of the People are brought to believe, that there is no praying by the Spirit, besides praying *Extempore*, then no man ever did, or ever could say Christ's Prayer by the Spirit of Christ.

Now, as to the other sort of Persons, who have some exceptions against some expressions in our Liturgy ; those things have been so fully examined, that of late we have heard very little of them ; and the matter of this is so clearly unexceptionable, and so fitted for the common use of all Christians, that all controversial Expressions were designedly avoided : And I do not know of any considerable Sect amongst us which may not joyn with every expression in it, except the *Socinians*. Now here perhaps some Jealousies may arise in the minds of men, that if there were not some real exception against the Liturgy, then so many good Teachers would not lay it aside ; nay, and not only so, but, as far as mens intentions can be guessed at by their words and actions, very much abhor it.

Now, as to the behaviour of our dissenting Brethren in this particular, I shall desire their admirers to remember this one thing, that His Majesty not long after His happy Restauration did put forth a Declaration concerning Ecclesiastical Affaires, wherein He did very graciously indulge, much to the dissatisfied Part of the
Clergy,

Clergy, in hopes thereby to win upon them; and in that Declaration He did propose this unto them, as a way whereby they might shew their Gratitude for so great a condescension, *That they would read so much of the Liturgy as themselves had no exception against:* But with many of them he could not prevail for so much as one Syllable, not one Collect, no nor so much as one Chapter according to the Rubrick; so much doth yielding work upon that good-natur'd Generation. Now whether this refractoriness as to the whole Book, and every part and parcel of it, could possibly proceed solely and altogether from Conscience, and not very much, if not altogether, from design or Humour, let their best Friends speak.

In the next place, now as to the Canons, I do not know that there doth or can lye any Objection against them which our present Debate is concerned about; because they are no immediate Parts of the Publick Worship, and therefore can be no cause of the present Separation; especially as to the People. As to the Canons made in the year 1640. I must needs confess, that the *Scotch* Commissioners did complain much against them, and some *English* Gentlemen made witty Speeches upon them; but they had both of them the ill luck to confess the real cause of the Pique which they had against them, *viz.* The acknowledgment of His Majesties Authority as being Independent, and above all Coercion, either Papal or Popular. A Doctrine which I must needs say was very in-
confi-

consistent with those Designs which those angry Patriots were at that time carrying on.. And I am very much mistaken if, at this very day, a great part of that Quarrel which is taken up against the Church be not founded upon this, that it is too faithfully devoted to the Interests of the Crown; and that many Persons are Presbyterians, Independants, Fifth-Monarchy men, &c. as so many sanctified disguises under which they act the Part of Common-wealths men.

3. *Canons or Ceremonies.*

IN the next place come we therefore to the Ceremonies; and there indeed the noise is very great. An Excellent Person, who for his Pious labours upon a noble Argument, and much more worthy of his Pen, deserves much honor, hath in this part of the Question express much more concern, than, I hope, himself upon a serious review will admit the Cause to bear, in a Book Entituled, *Liberty of Conscience upon its true and proper Grounds asserted and Vindicated, &c.* hath thus Expressed himself, p. 49. *How may we lament over the present Imposition of the Ceremonies now enjoyn'd among us in England, which are no part of Divine Truth, nor any of Christ's Institutions, but things perfectly Humane in their Creation; and yet are enforced by the Civil Power upon the Practice and Consciences of men.* Now here, with all due respect to that Learned Gentleman, I shall desire him to take notice, whether it be not an Excellency and a Felicity almost peculiar to the

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Church

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Church of *England*, that in all her Constitutions, her greatest Adversaries are forced to betake themselves to the scanning of a few Ceremonies, to find a cause, or to speak more properly, a shew of Controversie; and that himself in his own great Judgment hath not been able to find out any other flaw in the Matter of all her Laws, as much soever as he doth mislike the Imposition of them. As for the Ceremonies themselves, the Exceptions, or at least the Clamours are very many; That they are uncommanded by God; That they are significant; That they are Will-worship; That they are teaching for Doctrines of God the Commandments of men; And lastly, That they do give Scandal.

It is no sufficient Objection against our Ceremonies, that they are not by God commanded.

AS to the Ceremonies being uncommanded by God, I never heard of any man who pretended them to be otherwise; And therefore it is most clear and certain, that that Church doth not teach for Doctrines of God the Commandments of Men, which doth own publicly, that these are not the Doctrines of God, but only the Commandments of Man: And if any man doth mistake in this Case, which is a thing incredible that any should do so; but if there be such a one, I am sure that the mistake is his own and not the fault of the Church: For she hath taken
care

care to prevent it, in the Chapter of Ceremonies before the Common Prayers, wherein she declares that the Ceremonies which are retained, *are retained for Discipline and Order, which upon just Cause may be altered and changed, and therefore are not to be esteemed equal with Gods Law.* But however, this is plain in the nature of things, that although among the Ceremonies no one in particular is necessary, yet in general it is necessary, so far as Order and Decency is necessary, that some such there should be.

Nor, that they are significant.

BUT in the next place there is an Objection, supposed to be of much greater force, and that is this; That the Ceremonies are significant: And here I must needs confess, that if they could have alledged, that the Ceremonies had been insignificant, the Objection had been much more worthy of having some notice taken of it; because that the very nature and whole use of Ceremonies doth consist in being significant. And in this I appeal to all Mankind, whether in any one Action Sacred or Civil, any one Ceremony was ever instituted, unless it were in order to the signifying, denoting or expressing something by it. Nor is this all, for the Church hath taken care not only to vindicate the Innocency, but withall to declare the usefulness of the significance of her Ceremonies in the fore-mentioned Preface: *That they are neither dark nor dumb Ceremonies, but are so set forth, that every man may*

understand what they mean, and to what use they do serve : so that it is not like that in time to come they should be abused.

And after all this, methinks, our Brethren of the Presbytery should for their own sakes have had a great care of making use of this Objection, as being themselves as liable to it as any other Persons. The Authors of the Admonition to the Parliament in Queen Elizabeths days, Part. 2. have recommended Sitting at the Sacrament, upon this very superstitious score of significancy (as in our Case they always call it) in these words: *As in the Old Testament eating the Paschal Lamb standing, signified a readiness to pass; even so in the receiving it now Sitting, after the example of Christ, we signifie Rest, that is, a full finishing through Christ of all the Ceremonial Law, and a perfect Work of Redemption wrought, that giveth rest for ever.*

And in our own days, in that which by them was looked upon as a considerable Act of Divine Worship and Religious Adoration, the entering into a Publick Solemn National Covenant with Almighty God, as they Phrase it: The doing of this was prescribed with several Ceremonies uncommanded in Scripture, and by themselves intended to be very significant; as is to be found by every one who pleaseth to look in the Ordinance of Feb. 2. 1643. In this without referring us to any Book, Chapter, or Verse; they thought it sufficient to say, That it is ordered and ordained by the Lords and Commons in Parliament, that the said Covenantant

nant be solemnly taken in all places, and for the better and more orderly taking thereof, that these Directions ensuing are appointed and enjoyned to be strictly followed: Of which Directions the Thirteenth is this, the manner of taking it to be thus; *The Minister to read the whole Covenant distinctly and audibly in the Pulpit, and during the time of reading thereof the whole Congregation to be uncovered* (which by the way is a much greater shew of Reverence than they have taken care for, either at the reading of the Ten Commandements, or our Saviours Sermon upon the Mount) *and at the end of reading thereof all to take it standing, lifting up their Right Hand bare.* Now I think that it is highly requisite for these Men to consider with themselves, whether every one of all their own Pleas of the Purity and Simplicity of the Gospel way of Worship without the mixture of humane Inventions, and their bold surmises of Invading the Throne of Christ by determining those things which Christ hath left free, have any the least force against the Ceremonies of the Church, which they have not against this prescribed Formality of their own, in taking the Covenant.

Nor, that they grieve a peevish sort of Men.

BUT after all which is possible to be said in order to the clearing of the mistakes about the Ceremonies, there is an Objection which is supposed

supposed not to be capable of any answer to be made unto it, and that is this, That be they what they will in themselves, good men are offended at them, they grieve thousands of the Godly Brethren, and though we should grant such men to be mistaken, yet we must not offend our weak Brethren.

The Case of Scandal hath been so often and so clearly stated, that I shall say the less upon it; and therefore, instead of the Argument, I shall rather choose to say something to the Persons who use it. In the first place I shall readily grant, that if any Persons are really offended at the use of the Ceremonies, in their own way of understanding that word, they must needs be very weak Brethren, and I shall only ask them the old Question, *How long they will be weak?* And I shall profess my self to have no very honorable Opinion of the means of Knowledge, the Opportunities of choice Attainments which are to be had in the Conventicles: If so be that those, who are such weak Brethren as not to be got above such silly Scruples, are looked upon to be sufficiently gifted to be Publick Teachers amongst them.

In the next place I shall ask, who taught the People to be offended at a few harmless Ceremonies? Who raised all their causeless Scruples, infused so many senseless Jealousies, and not being content to have at first infused these needless fears, do still go on to Nurse up and cherish them? Who first betrayed great numbers into folly, and ever after continued to humor them in it? He
who

who can conform himself, and yet refuseth to do so, for fear least his Auditory and Acquaintance should abate in their esteem or contributions towards him; If he means sincerely, and to shew himself an honest man, he ought to deal faithfully with his Admirers, and tell them really what himself thinks, communicate the Satisfaction which he hath received, and perswade them not to be longer needlessly afraid where no fear is: It is very plain that the generality of Dissenters do entertain wild suspicions about the Service of the Church, upon no other ground than an implicate faith which they have in the skill and honesty of their Teachers. Such and such a one is a very precious and knowing man, and do you think that he would not conform, if he did not know Conformity to be a sin? The Pastor and his Flock in this Case do mutually guide and are guided by each other; he makes it his business to please and humor them, and they look upon it as a great mark of their Judgment, and an Infallible token of their Election to admire him.

But if the weakness of these our Brethren hath so great a priviledge entailed upon it, as that we must do nothing which they have taken a fancy against; a thing in it self lawful and imposed by Lawful Authority, must immediately become unlawful, if so be that any scrupulous man can be brought to entertain a foolish jealousy about it: Then is this kind of weakness endued with a very strange degree of Omnipotence; because that upon this supposition, the very mistakes of

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men are able to alter the Nature of things ; A thing in it self innocent, doth according to this Doctrine, immediately become unlawful, as soon as ever that any fanciful deluded man doth erroneously conceive it to be so ; But methinks that those who pretend to be such eager asserters of Christian Liberty, as this sort of men have always done, should, of all other persons, the least endure to have it thus trifled with ; as to have it believed to be openly exposed to lye perpetually at the mercy of all the Humor, Melancholly, Artifice, Cheat and Discontent in the whole Nation.

But if this be the meaning of those Texts of Scripture, where we are commanded to avoid the giving of Scandal (as most certainly and evidently it is not) That the Actions of all Private Men, and the Authority of all Publick Constitutions must be as often over-ruled as any single Person is, either by his own Folly, or by the Arts of other men, imposed upon to believe evil of them ; then can no man tell in any matter of Action Sacred or Civil (except in the Matters of immediate and plain Divine Precept) what one thing shall be lawful for him to do in the very next moment.

But if it be thus appointed by the Apostle, That the mistakes of other Men, though we should suppose them to be well-meaning ones, are to have so uncontrollable an influence upon the Actions of all private Persons, and the Decrees of all Publick ones ; If it be thus, I say, it will thence follow very apparently, that there
is

is a great necessity lying upon the Government, of taking care what kind of Persons are intrusted with teaching the People. For if Consciences, though never so erroneous, are of right, and by Apostolical appointment to have so great a regard had unto them; then of all things great circumspection should be used, and security taken, for the Understanding and Honesty of all those who are intrusted to be Guides of Consciences. For if the Errors of Conscience are things of so great Authority, as to be an immediate *Supersedeas* to our whole Christian Liberty, to all sorts of Humane Laws, then it is the greatest Phrenzy imaginable, to grant a promiscuous Liberty to whoever pleaseth to teach and instruct the People. Alas! the Vulgar are easily imposed upon; and it is not impossible but that we may find in our days, what *St. Paul* did in his, That there are those *who will speak lyes in Hypocrisie because of advantage*; and bring their Auditories to admire those very Doctrines which themselves do heartily despise; outwardly court their Hearers, and inwardly laugh at them. And in the mean time, are not Religion and Government like to be at a very fine pass? when who so pleaseth shall have the Priviledge of making all possible advantages of that very Scruple which himself was Author of; and, when all other Objections fail, shall be allowed to plead his own exemption from all Obedience to the settled Constitutions, from the dissatisfaction of other men, who, if it had not been for him, had never entertained the least thought of being dissatisfied.

There

There is no sinfulness, in that the Church imposeth new Bonds and Terms of Communion.

BUT in the next place it is frequently urged, That those Terms of Communion are not look'd upon as sufficient, which were always look'd upon as such in former days; but there are newer and straighter Bonds added to them; a new Declaration of Assent and Consent: And besides all this, the Consciences of Men are provoked, which otherwise would have remained silent, if not satisfied; new Scruples are raised in the Minds of Men, which before lay Buried, and which would otherwise have been quite forgot; in that it is not thought sufficient that the Covenant should be laid aside, but that it should be formally renounced; and not only so, but it is required that men must swear not only for themselves, but that no Man else is obliged by it.

Of the Assent and Consent.

NOW after all this wonder, there is not any one thing which is not very easily accounted for: For surely it hath been among men not at all unusual, nor in it self strange, that where former securities have been found too slight, to add others to them. As for the Declaration of Assent and Consent, the addition which it doth make to the former Subscriptions is not so considerable, as to raise a scruple in the mind of any man who was real in them. And I suppose that the great Mystery which is pretended

tended to lye in the terrible sound of Assent and Consent, which the People are taught to be affrighted at, as if some dismal meaning were hid under it, is nothing else but an Art to raise their Jealousie, that so they might be the better prepared for the finding out some Plot or other in the following Renunciation of the Covenant. A thing which was ordered not without great cause ; and it is very suspicious that that Cause doth not only continue, but increase, as appears but too plainly from this, that there is so great a Clamour raised upon it. And this Cause did in a great measure proceed from themselves, and that great stir which they made about the Obligation of the Covenant, in the first and second year immediately after the Restauration of His Majesty, both from Prefs and Pulpit. Parties were made in the City, and endeavored to be made in Parliament, for the owning of that Obligation. It was with great confidence urged, that it was *A Publick and National Oath, binding all Persons of this Nation, whether they did Swear it personally or not, and all Posterity after us in their particular places; and all that shall succeed into the Publick Places and Politick Capacities of this Kingdom, to pursue the things Covenanted for: And this Obligation is for ever to remain and abide, and by no Humane Act or Power to be Absolved or made Void;* As, amongst others, Mr. Crofton hath endeavoured to prove at large in his Famous Writings on that Subject. And, to speak the truth, if we once admit the Gounds which this Party of Men do go upon, what he doth alledge hath

hath great reason in it ; it being very Evident, that those Clauses which he doth produce out of the Covenant, do suppose all Posterity to be involved in them : And this he urgeth not as his own single Opinion, but as the Sence of his whole Party ; And, besides the Evidence of the thing, he alledgeth, The Testimony to the Truth of Jesus Christ and the Covenant, by the *London Ministers, Decemb. 14. 1647.* several of which are at this present Preachers to the separated Congregations ; In which it is plainly declared, That it is not in the Power of any Person or Persons upon Earth to dispence with or absolve us from it. Nay, the Power of Parliaments, which in other Cases is allowed to be large enough, is in this bound up, as Mr. Cr. tells us, *p. 139. That the Parliament consisting of Lords and Commons, and that in their Publick Capacity as a Parliament; the House of Commons Assembled in their House, and in formality of the Body of the Nation, with their Speaker before them, went unto St. Margarets Church in Westminster, with the greatest Solemnity imaginable, did, as the Representative Body of the Kingdom, Swear this Covenant : which, as a farther Testimony that it was a National Covenant, they caused to be Printed with their Names Subscribed, and to be Hanged up in all Churches, and in their own House, as a Compass whereby (in conformity to Right, Reason and Religion) to steer their then Debates, and to dictate TO ALL THAT SHOULD SUCCEED IN THAT PLACE AND CAPACITY what Obligation did before God lye upon the Body of this Nation.*

Of

Of Renouncing the Covenant.

Those who plead for the removal of the Renunciation of the Covenant, either they do believe, that the Covenant doth oblige at this time, or, that it doth not oblige; if they do believe that it doth not oblige, why may they not declare that they do believe it not to do so? One Reason may indeed be given, why the Preachers themselves may believe the Covenant not to oblige, and yet that they should by all means avoid the declaring that they do thus believe; and that is this, that they would have the People believe it to have an Obligation, although themselves believe it to have none. A Perswasion this, which in some juncture of Affairs or other, they may chance to make very great use of; and that this may not be altogether incredible, their Procedure hath not been one jot honefter than this amounts to in another part of the Controversie between us. It is well known that there are among them, and not among the meanest of them who have believed the Liturgy and Ceremonies to be very Innocent, and yet could be never brought to say one word to the People of this their Belief; But on the other side now, if they are really perswaded that the Covenant doth carry a lasting Obligation along with it: In that Case I shall not, during that Perswasion of theirs, desire them to Renounce it; but withall I must crave their leave to add this further, that

that during that Perswasion of theirs, I think it but reasonable, that the Government should cast a very watchful eye over them. And of this I shall give an account from the Covenant it self, wherein there are so many things, and of such fatal and universal consequence, Covenanted for, that the whole Nation is highly concerned, that no considerable Part of it should look upon themselves, and every Body else, as lying under the Obligation of the Oath of God, to watch all opportunities wherein they may accomplish such great and publick mischiefs, as will appear by a particular Consideration of the Thing it self.

Certain Articles of the Covenant, that make it dangerous not to be Renounced. ARTICLE I.

THAT we shall sincerely, really, and constantly through the Grace of God, endeavor in our several Places and Callings the Preservation of the Reformed Religion in the Church of Scotland, in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government against our Common Enemies: The Reformation of Religion in the Kingdoms of England and Ireland in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government, according to the Word of God, and the example of the best Reformed Churches: And shall endeavor to bring the Churches of God in the Three Kingdoms to the nearest Conjunction and Uniformity in Religion, in Confession of Faith, Form of Church-Government, Directory for Worship and Catechizing; That we and our Posterity after us, may

as Brethren, live in Faith and Love, and that the Lord may delight to dwell in the midst of us.

In which Article it is easie to observe many things lyable to very just and material Exceptions, as first, by what Authority can any private man in *England*, if he keeps himself within his own Place and Calling, intermeddle either in the Preservation or Alteration of the Religion and Government of the Church and Kingdom of *Scotland*? Nay, by what Authority can any Person in this Kingdome whatever, be he in what Publick Capacity he will (His Majesty only excepted, or those who Act by Commission from Him) have any thing to do with the Concerns in that Kingdom? And Secondly, this first Part of the Article may upon very good Grounds be supposed to be inconsistent with the remaining Parts of it: For we are Sworn to *Preserve the Doctrine, Discipline, &c. of Scotland*, and withall, to *bring the Three Kingdoms to the nearest Uniformity in Religion, Confession of Faith, Form of Church-Government, Directory for Worship and Catechizing*: So that *Scotland* must necessarily be our Pattern; and yet in the same breath we are Sworn to Reform *England* and *Ireland*, according to the Word of God, and the Example of the best Reformed Churches: And it is more than possible, that our own Church, as it is already by Law established, or at least some other Church beyond the Seas, may come altogether as near the word of God, as that of *Scotland*: And what is to be done in
that

that Case? And in the Third place, all the other Dissenters whatever, besides the Presbyterians, are highly concerned to see that the Covenant is not looked upon as a thing of any Obligation; because that that is exprefs for Uniformity, and as such, is not less than absolutely inconsistent with Liberty of Conscience; and as hard thoughts soever as the smaller Sects have entertained concerning the Bishops; they are much more concerned to secure themselves against not a few, nor the least Considerable, among their own dear Brethren.

ARTICLE 2.

THAT we shall in like manner, without respect of Persons, endeavor the Extirpation of Popery, Prelacy; that is, Church-Government by Archbishops, Bishops, their Chancellors, and Commissaries, Deans, Deans and Chapters, Arch-Deacons, and all other Ecclesiastical Officers depending on that Hierarchy; Superstition, Heresie, Schism, Profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound Doctrine, and the Power of Godliness, lest we partake in other mens sins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their Plagues; and that the Lord may be One, and his Name One in these Kingdoms.

As to the former part of this Article, that which concerns the overthrow of the established Government of the Church, I shall only say this, that the Modesty of these men is in this case very Admirable, and there is no doubt to be

be made, but that in any other Kingdom it would be thought to be so; in that they do expect to be admitted into the Preferments of the Church, and to be allowed to be publick Preachers in it; and yet at the very same time, they do desire to be excused from declaring, that they are not of a Perswasion, that there doth lye an Obligation by Oath upon them themselves, the whole Nation, or (to say no more) at least upon some other Person, who ought to be nameless, to overthrow the whole frame of the Government of that Church, which they desire to be admitted into the Preferments of, and particularly of that Bishop by whose hands they are admitted. I would fain know whether there be any other Part of the World, where any Persons dare to demand of the present establishment, that it would for their sakes so far relax it self, in order to their admission into it. Sure these men imagine, that the Church is in a very great necessity of them, that it cannot stand one moment without them; when, in the very Terms of their Admission, they do demand no less than this, that a new Law should be made on purpose, whereby they may be privileged from declaring, whether or no it is Lawful for them to suffer the Church to continue two moments longer than there shall arise an opportunity, wherein they may be able to overthrow it.

As for the remaining Part of the Article concerning *Superstition, Heresie, Schism, Prophaneness,*
D and

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and whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound Doctrin or the Power of Godliness, &c. I shall leave that to our Friends of the Presbytery and their Separating Brethren to dispute about it: And it is clear enough, that they are altogether as unlike to agree in those Particulars, as I am with either of them: As lovingly as ever they may look upon one another at present, I am sure that the Covenant, when opportunity serves, will be found to be levelled as directly against the Conventicles, as against the Cathedrals. I shall observe no more in this Article besides the great Charitableness of the Conclusion, *That the Lord may be One and his Name One in the Three Kingdoms*: As if the Church of England followed after strange Gods, and that those ordained by her were really no other than, as they are often stiled according to the good manners which the People learn of too many such Preachers, the Priests of Baal.

A R T I C L E 3.

WE shall with the same sincerity, Reality, and Constancy in our several Vocations, endeavour, with our Estates and Lives, mutually to preserve the Rights and Priviledges of the Parliament and the Liberties of the Kingdoms; and to Preserve and Defend the Kings Majesties Person and Authority, in the Preservation and Defence of the True Religion and Liberties of the Kingdom: That the World may bear witness with our Consciences of
our

our Loyalty, and that we have no thoughts and intention to diminish His Majesties Just Power and Greatness.

This Article hath been very much, and very much insisted on and gloryed in for the seeming Loyalty of one Expression in it ; But, in order to a right Understanding ; let us consider how Affairs stood at that time . It is well known , that the Compilers and Enjoyners of this Covenant were, at that very time, in Actual Arms (I hope that it is no offence , if I say in actual Rebellion) against the King. This very Covenant was a great Instrument by which they did carry on their Design then on Foot against Him : The King was betrayed and sold by one part of the Covenanters, those from *Scotland* ; he was Bought, Imprisoned, and in effect deposed by another part of the Covenanters, those in *England*, and by the most Loyal of them, even the Lords and Commons Assembled at *Westminster* ; who by their Votes of Non-address, Feb. 17. 1647. (which, let us note , was long before the Seclusion by the Army) did declare, First, *That they would make no farther Addresses or Applications to the King* : And in the Fourth Vote, *That they will receive no more Messages from the King, and do enjoin that no Person whatever do receive or bring any Message from the King to Both or either Houses of Parliament, or to any other Person* ; which Votes they published with a Declaration, wherein they lay down some few of those many

Reasons (as they express it) why they cannot repose any more Trust in Him.

Nay, long before that time, when the *Scots* complained of some rigours used towards His Majesty, as being contrary to the Covenant, the House of Commons did return them this Answer, *Novemb. 18. 1646. We Observe that you mention the Defence of the King twice, from the Covenant ; but in both Places you leave out, in the Preservation of the True Religion, &c. A main Clause without which the other ought not to be mentioned.* Which very Answer themselves did afterwards receive from their own Army, in a Declaration from *St. Albans, Novemb. 18. 1648.* Where they reminded their Masters of their own Doctrine, *The Defence of the King, say they, is to be understood with this restriction ; In the Preservation of, &c. or otherwise the whole Proceedings of Both Kingdoms, in making and maintaining War against Him in Defence of Religion and Liberties are questionable for breach of Covenant ; since that way of preserving did probably tend to the destruction, and was without any safe provision, either for his Person, or that Authority which can properly be called His, or understood in Conjunction with His Person, but that therein His Person might probably have been destroyed under the Sword or by a Bullet, yea was ordinarily endeavored to be so, as well as the Persons of others in Arms with Him ; and that Authority of His was certainly opposed and endeavoured to be destroyed thereby, instead of being defended.* Remonstrance from *St. Albans,*
P. 55. Indeed

Indeed, about the time of the Kings Mur-
ther, many of the Covenanters did declare
themselves a little dissatisfied with that way
of Proceeding against Him; and did (how
reasonably upon their own Grounds, I know
not) urge the Covenant for His Preserva-
tion: But of their Behaviour in this Case, I
shall give only the Account of an Author, who
lived in those times when they had opportu-
nities enough to have taken what Account of
Him, themselves pleased. His words are these
in a Book Entituled, *A short View of the Life
and Reign of King Charles the First, Monarch
of Great Britain*, p. 94. *The Presbyterians car-
ried on this Tragedy to the very last Act, from
the first bringing in of the Scots to the beginning
of the War, and from the beginning of the War,
till they had brought Him Prisoner to Holmby-
House, and then Quarrelled with the Independents
for taking of the Work out of their hands, and
robbing them of the long expected fruit of their
Plots and Practices. They cried out against them
in their Pulpits, and clamoured against them in
their Pamphlets for that, of which themselves were
at least parcel-guilty, Et si non re at voto sal-
tem Regicidæ, &c.* On the other side, the In-
dependents, who washed their hands in the Blood
of the King, seemed as desirous as the Presbyterians
to wash their hands of it: By them it was alledged
more calmly, that they had put Charles Stuart
to Death, against whom they proceeded as the
Cause of so much bloodshed; but that the King
had been Murthered a long time before by the

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Presbyterians, when they deprived Him of His Crown, His Sword, His Scepter; of His Crown, by forcing from Him those Prerogatives which placed Him in a Throne of Eminency above His People; of His Sword, by wresting the Militia out of His Hands, by which He was made unable to Protect them; and of His Scepter, in divesting Him of His Power of calling Parliaments, and of His Negative Voice in making those Laws by which He was to Govern all Estates of Men under His Dominion: And more than so, they had deprived Him of His Natural Liberty as a Man; of the Society of His Wife, as He was a Husband; of the Conversation of His Children, as He was a Father; of the Attendance of His Servants, as He was a Master; and in a word, of all those Comforts which might make Life valued for a Blessing: So that there was nothing left for the Independents to do, but to put an end to those Calamities into which this miserable Man, this Vir dolorum, as He might very well be called, had been so accursedly plunged by the Presbyterians.

To which I shall only add this farther, that notwithstanding all that Loyalty which the Covenanters have so often boasted of, from the Obligation of the Covenant; yet it is well known, that the Covenant was placed by themselves as a Bar between Him and His Throne, that without submitting to this, they could not endure to think of His Restauration to that; and this to so high a degree, that even in *January 1648*. Notwithstanding the
apparent

apparent danger which the Kings Life was known to be in, yet even then, the General Assembly of Scotland did violently oppose all courses thought upon for His Relief, and pressed earnestly, *That His Majesty's Concessions and Offers concerning Religion, may directly and positively be declared unsatisfactory to the Parliament, and that there shall be no engagement for restoring His Majesty to one of His Houses with Honour, Freedom and Safety, before security and Assurance be had from His Majesty by His Solemn Oath under Hand and Seal; that He shall for Himself and His Successors consent and agree to Acts of Parliament enjoyning the League and Covenant, and fully Establishing Presbyterian Government, Directory of Worship, and Confession of Faith in all His Majesties Dominions; and that His Majesty shall never make opposition to any of these, or endeavor any change thereof.* Vid. Declar. of Jan. 10. 1648.

Now therefore seeing it is so plain a Case, that in the Opinion of the Compilers and Enjoyners of the Covenant; all the fore-mentioned Violences both might and ought to have been used against the King, by Vertue and in persuance of the Covenant: It thence follows unavoidably, that His Majesty is not a little concerned to be very watchful over all those Persons who are so tender of the Honor of the Covenant, that they demand it as the Condition of their Admission into the Church, that they may by no means be questioned concerning their Opinion about its Obligation.

ARTICLE 4.

WE shall with all Faithfulness endeavor the Discovery of all such as have been or shall be Incendiaries, Malignants or evil Instruments, by hindering the Reformation of Religion, dividing the King from His People, or one of the Kingdoms from another, or making any Faction or Parties among the People contrary to this League and Covenant, that they may be brought to publick Trial, and receive condign punishment, as the degree of their offences shall require or deserve, or the Supreme Judicatories of both Kingdoms respectively, or others, having power from them for that effect, shall judge convenient.

It is very well known what the meaning of *Incendiaries and Malignants* is, in this Article: And it is shrewdly to be suspected, That those who are perswaded of the Obligation of this Oath, are likewise perswaded, that those *Incendiaries and Malignants*, have not as yet been brought to condign punishment; and whatever benefit the Covenanters themselves may receive by an Act of Oblivion, it is much to be suspected, that those who are Covenanted against, are looked upon as not capable of receiving any advantage by it: And there is reason to believe, that those who scruple the Validity of that Act of Parliament which declares against the Obligation of the Covenant, are by

no

no means to be trusted; least, if opportunity should serve, they would not likewise scruple the Validity of that Act of Parliament which gave them Indempnity. For thus, according to their own Grounds, they may argue, The Act of Oblivion is against the Covenant, and then it followeth in the next place, that it is against their Consciences; It is against the *Oath of God lying upon themselves and upon the whole Nation, and upon all Posterity*, And no Humane Act or Power can absolve them or any one else from it; and every thing done against the Covenant is null and void, the whole Nation being bound up by it to all Ages. For therefore it was *That the Covenant was hung up in the Parliament; as a Compass whereby to steer their Debates, and to dictate to all, who shall succeed in that place and Capacity, what Obligation doth before God lye upon the Body of this Nation*, as I have before Observed. Now upon these mens suppositions, there is no Security to be had, but that they who passed an Act of Oblivion, to pardon any thing done against the Covenant, are involved in guilt and liable to punishment for so doing; and are upon those very accounts to expect, when Providence shall put an opportunity into the hands of these Zealots, the very same Return which the Prophet made to *Ahab*, 1 King. 20. v. 42. *Thus saith the Lord, Because thou hast let go a Man whom I have appointed to destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people.*

The

The next thing which I shall observe in this Article is this, That those Persons who Covenanted together, among other things, to maintain the Liberties of the Kingdom, have so far forgot themselves, as that in that very Covenant they have set up an Arbitrary Government: The Rule of condign punishment here set down, is not any known Law, no, not so much as a new one of their own making; *but, as the degree of their offences shall require or deserve, or the Supreme Judicatories of both Kingdoms respectively, or others having power from them for that effect, shall judge convenient.* By which words it is plain, that they did not look upon it as sufficient to take an Arbitrary power into their own hands, but likewise did delegate it to as many else besides as they pleased.

ARTICLE 5.

WHereas the happiness of a Blessed Peace between the Kingdoms, ~~denied~~ in former times to our Progenitors, is by the good Providence of God granted to us, and hath lately been concluded and settled by both Parliaments; we shall each one of us, according to our Place and Interest, endeavor that they may be conjoynd in a firm Peace and Union to all Posterity, and that Justice may be done upon all wilful opposers thereof, in manner expressed in the precedent Article: According to the preceding Article,

ticle, *i. e.* as shall be judged convenient.

The Modesty of these men is very admirable, in that they would out-face the World, that *England* and *Scotland* were never at peace in former times, or, rather their Language is something Mysterious, that the Two Nations were never at Peace till they had involved them in a War. But as in the former Article they were, as I have shewed, tender of the Liberty of the Subject; so in this they have been very careful of the Authority of His Majesty, in that they have taken upon them to make Peace with another Kingdom without him; and withal when that very Peace was nothing else, besides their joyning Forces against Him.

A R T I C L E 6.

WE shall also according to our Place and Calling, in this Common Cause of Religion, Liberty and Peace of the Kingdom, assist and defend all those that enter into this League and Covenant, in the maintaining and pursuing thereof; and shall not suffer our selves directly or indirectly, by whatsoever Combination, Perswasion or Terror to be divided and withdrawn from this Blessed Union and Conjunction; whether to make defection to the contrary Part, or to give our selves to detestable Indifferency or Neutrality
in.

in this Cause, which so much concerns the Glory of God, the Good of the Kingdom, and the Honour of the King : But shall all the days of our lives zealously and constantly continue therein against all Opposition, and promote the same according to our power against all Letts and Impediments whatsoever : And what we are not able of our selves to suppress or overcome, we shall reveal and make known, that it may be timely prevented and removed : All which we shall do in the sight of God.

From which Article it is plainly to be seen, That those who do believe themselves to lye under the Obligation of this Covenant, are and ought to be looked upon as a Party already formed and combined together against the whole Nation besides, having a common Band to unite and tye them fast together : And this is such an Union as they look upon as Sacred and indissoluble. And the Ends, in order to which they are thus combined, are in their esteem such, as that nothing can excuse the least intermission in their persuance after them, besides an absolute Impossibility, and even in that case it is lawful for them only, to delay so long, as to expect a more favourable season : For they are according to this Article, *Never to be wrought over to so much as a detestable Indifferency or Neutrality in this Cause of God ; but zealously and constantly to continue therein against all Opposition, all Letts and Impediments whatsoever.*

And

And having now laid down the Six Articles of the Covenant, I shall only add a few of the last words of the large and solemn Conclusion of it; wherein they pray God to bless their proceedings herein with such success as may be an encouragement to other Churches, groaning under, or in danger of the Yoke of Antichristian Tyranny, to joyn in the same or like Association or Covenant, to the Glory of God, the Enlargement of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, and the Peace and Tranquillity of Christian Kingdoms and Commonwealths.

Of the Conclusion of it.

IT hath been often said in the behalf of the Presbyterians, that they did not Engage in the late War under a less Authority than that of the Two Houses of Parliament: What Authority the Two Houses of Parliament have in Raising a War against the King shall be no part of this Enquiry, nor whether the Lords and Gentlemen who at that time staid at *Westminster* were the Two Houses of Parliament? Be these two things as they will, although it is not unknown what may be said as to both those Cases; yet however the Covenant, hath informed us of another sort of Authority, under which a War may be raised at any time against all the Kings in *Europe*: Because in these words is held forth a publick Invitation to all Subjects whatsoever, who do either really groan

groan under, or are in any danger of any thing, which our folk have pleased to call, or themselves shall chance to fancy to be a Yoke of Antichristian Tyranny, to enter either into this or the like Association or Covenant. Now I suppose, that it is no easie task to make out, that all Kingdoms have Parliaments endued with so large a share of the Sovereignty, as that they have Authority to take up Armes against their respective Princes: And if there were such Parliaments every where, this Invitation is only made to the Christian Churches, without taking the least notice of Parliaments; nay with a full assurance that there were no such Parliaments to be taken notice of. So that by this Doctrine the Church alone may enter into Association against the State upon the Score of Religion (especially if it can but cry out Antichrist) may engage the Subjects of all *Europe* against their Sovereigns, be they Princes or Common-wealths.

I know very well that those who urge the taking away of the Declaration enjoyned concerning the renouncing of the Covenant, have one Evasion whereby to avoid entring into the Merits of the Cause, and that is this, The seeming unreasonableness of that Clause; Also *I hold that there lyeth no Obligation upon me, or any other Person from the Oath commonly called the Solemn, &c.* Is it not unjust that one man should be bound to Swear to the Obligations of another? As plausible soever as this may seem, no doubt it is but an Evasion; for it is well known
whom

whom they mean by that other Person whom they suppose to be obliged ; and besides to make this Case seem much harder than it is indeed ; They endeavour to perswade us, that this Renunciation is what really it is not ; for it is plain, that this Declaration is not an Oath, nor any thing like one, only we are called upon to declare what our Opinion is in a Case there put to us ; we are so far from being required in this Case unto the Swearing for any one else ; that we are not called upon to Swear for our selves, we do not Swear that there doth lye no Obligation either upon our selves or any other Person, but only that we do not believe that there doth.

And after all this, the pretence of being scrupulous about declaring any thing concerning *the Obligation of any other Person* hath one great reserve in it : For, the very supposal of the possibility of that is in effect to say, that the Covenant as to the matter of it is in every particular respect lawful ; for unless it be lawful in every particular respect, no Body can be obliged by it ; and if once it be granted to be a lawful Oath, it will be very easie thence to deduce that it is Obligatory to more Persons than one.

And thus I have taken a short review of the Covenant, wherein it is very plain that there are many things of such Universal and dangerous Consequence therein Covenanted for, as do render it not altogether unworthy the care of those who are in Publick Places to consider a
little

little with themselves, what the meaning of it is, that so many men do profess themselves to have so deep a sence of the Obligation of the Covenant, as that a law must be made on purpose to gratifie them in that humour: The Publick Constitutions must veil to their unknown Scruples, and with the Honour of having the Wisdom of the whole Nation confess it self to have been all along mistaken, they expect to be admitted Publick Preachers; This Plea is such a one as doth look as if it had some deep meaning in it, and ought to be thoroughly understood before admitting; I shall end this Argument as I did begin it, Either these men do believe that the Covenant doth oblige, or, they do not believe it, if they do not believe it to oblige, I cannot see what honest Reason can be given why they should Scruple to declare this their Belief; But on the other side, if they do really believe that the Covenant doth oblige them, it is much more adviseable, that this Perswasion should keep them out of the Church, than that they should bring this Perswasion into it: And whereas the Law-makers hoped that the Peevishness of this sort of People would within some reasonable compass of time have grown weary of it self, and accordingly had provided that the Declaration against the Covenant should, within a few Years, of course have become antiquated; the Clamours of these men have given so reasonable a Jealousie about their retaining their old Principles, as may well serve to awaken the Caution of those in Authority,

rity, so far as to put them in mind of giving New Life to their Old Act, and enlarging the terms of its Duration: For seeing that the Dissenters do value themselves so much upon their remembring the Covenant, our Governours have no small Concern to let it be seen, that neither do they forget it.

An Instance in a known Presbyterian who did Renounce Publickly the Covenant, as to the most meritorious part of it, voluntarily, long before the Kings Restauration.

TO all which hath been already said, I shall add this one Thing; It may not unjustly seem a Cause of much wonder how it should come to pass, that the Covenant should be looked upon as a thing much more Sacred and indissoluble now than it was in former Dayes; That Correspondence which Mr. Jenkins, and a great many other London Ministers held with the Scots, for the sake of which he and others were cast into Prison, will not be denied to be in pursuance of the Obligation of the Covenant, and of that Part of it which they are always glorying in, the Loyal and Meritorious Part, as to the Authority of His Majesty: Now I dare appeal to any Member of his present Congregation, whether he hath not Renounced this part of the Obligation of the Covenant, in these following Words.

*To the Supreme Authority, the
Parliament of the Common-
wealth of England.*

*The Humble Petition of William
Jenkins Prisoner.*

THAT the Providence of God hath in the Judgment of your Petitioner as evidently appeared in the removing of others from, and investing your Honours with the Government of this Nation, as ever they appeared in the taking away or bestowing of any Government in any History of any Age in the World.

That he apprehends that a refusal to be subject to this present Authority, under the pretence of upholding the Title of *ANY ONE* upon the Earth, is a refusal to acquiesce in the wise and righteous pleasure of God; such an opposing of the Government set up by the Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth, as none can have peace either in acting or suffering for: And that your Petitioner looks upon it as his Duty to yield to this Authority, all active and cheerful Obedience, even for Conscience sake, &c.

Here is a plain Renunciation of all the Obligation of the Covenant, so far as respects the King; the good man is quit by Providence,
nay

may did not that whole Party, as scrupulous as ever they may now seem, from that time forward ever afterward till the laying aside the Family of *Cromwells*, absolutely lay aside all thought of any manner of Obligation either to King or Covenant.

How it comes to pass, that the Presbyterians and other Dissenters, whose Opinions and Pleas are mutually so inconsistent, do agree in their clamours for Liberty of Conscience.

AND now after all these dangers which will be perpetually impending over us from the Covenant, and which we can never be secure from, so long as there is the least pretence remaining among us, that that Oath is at all Obligatory; there is another thing which may justly raise our wonder, and may concern us much more than the generality of us are aware, to enquire what may be the meaning of it; and that is this, to consider how it doth come to pass, that the Presbyterians and the other Sectaries do all at present unite in the Common Plea of Liberty of Conscience; For it is very plain that in this part of the Debate between us, their Inclinations, Judgments and Interests are very different, and their Pleas utterly inconsistent. It is not so long ago, but that some alive remember it, that the sweet noise of Liberty of Conscience made a very

pleasant sound, and the Dissenters from the legal Establishment were all for a while hugely taken themselves, and did endeavour to charm each other with it; but within the compass of a very little time, they themselves could not tell what to do with it, fell out with one another about the Nature, Bounds, and Limits of it; and even at this very day it is a clear Case, That any Private Person, without the least entrenching upon the Authority of his Superiours, may safely undertake, that all the Pretenders to Liberty of Conscience in the whole Nation, shall every one of them have their utmost wish, in the very same moment that they themselves shall all agree about it; I must needs say that this Plea is at the first view something specious, and hath some shews of reason in it; But if it be a little narrowly looked into, it will be found to be a fine word, which no body knoweth the meaning of, a thing which looks prettily, but is of no manner of use, which very many Persons do admire, and very few if any at all will in the least endure.

And to make this evident, let us consider that this Liberty of Conscience must be either limited, or unlimited; If limited, it is by no means to be called Liberty of Conscience; nay, it is a plain giving up of the Cause, for it is an actual granting, that Conscience is neither so Sacred, nor hath any Right to be looked upon as so tender a thing, but that it both may and ought to have bounds and limits set unto it; and

and I believe that there are few men who are not of this mind, or, if they are not at present, a little experience will quickly bring them to be of it.

They themselves cannot agree, what Liberty of Conscience is, and what are its true bounds.

NOW if Conscience be to be limited, then they who do not like those limits which the Law hath already set unto it should do well (when they have obtained leave for their so doing) to propose those other Limits which they see cause to desire ; and after they are agreed themselves about those Limits, let them in a dutiful manner offer them to their Superiours, alledge their Reasons, and among them, let them by no means omit this one, which they so often boast of and Triumph in, the great numbers, and Quality of those Persons who are agreed upon those Bounds and Limits, who will acquiesce and rest satisfied in them : And without the doing of this, the Raisers of all these Clamours do nothing else but put an intolerable affront upon the Wisdom and Authority of the Nation, to demand so importunately the Alteration of the settled Constitution, in order to the Gratification of no body knoweth whom, why, or in what, either how far the Alteration is desired, or what is designed to be the effect of any such Alteration. Let, I say, the Dis-

ters, who take themselves to be considerable enough to expect a publick change for their sakes, declare concerning themselves and their Intentions, We are they who do desire an Alteration ; we do desire it to be made only thus far, and then we will acquiesce in it, and *in our several Places and Callings* (according to a known reading) will endeavour to make all others to acquiesce in it ; and we know, that all the Sober, Serious, Peaceable, Godly, Knowing, Conscientious Part of the Nation will joyn with us in it.

When the Noise-makers have done this, then, and not before, it will be seasonable to harken unto them : Upon these Terms, I say, and only upon these, their Proposals will be in a condition to be taken into Consideration : When it is once known what the desires of any Party are, then there is room for enquiry, whether or no, or how far they carry Reason in them. And it may sometimes so chance, that such demands as are not altogether reasonable in themselves, may yet in some sort be thought fit to be complied with in regard of the Number, Quality, Merits or Interest of those Persons who appear to be fond of them. In a Debate about the Alteration of a Legal Establishment, there are Two things highly considerable ; 1. The Nature of the Alteration it self ; 2. The Nature of those who desire it ; who they are, how many, and what kind of People. Now these are things which themselves alone are qualified to make out unto us ; and till they have done that, Au-
thority

thority is scarce in a Capacity to concern it self about it : For it can have no Measures to take, nor propose to it self any End ; it can neither know what Concessions to make, nor to whom; can have no way the least assurance, either what will satisfie, or who they are who are to be satisfied.

Of Comprehension, and how little will be gained by granting it.

AND as for the late device of Comprehension, the nature of it is as yet unknown, and he must be a bold Man who will undertake for the Event of it. As to that which is by ordinary Persons to be understood of it, it amounts to no more than a pretty Artifice of saving the Reputation of about a dozen Persons, who are sick of their present Separation from the Church, and stand in need of a plausible Pretence under which to return unto it : Their credit will not suffer them to Renounce their Old Principles, and they are weary of sticking longer to them. Now if the Pride of these Men should be thus far gratified , who can secure us of any great Effect from it ? Will their Hearers imitate their Teachers in their compliance upon these Terms or abhor them for it ? And if we had any assurance in getting above these Difficulties, yet however, as to all those who do not come within the Comprehension , every one of all the Pleas of Liberty of Conscience and Persecution

remain as they were before, so that such a Purchase will be upon no prudent estimate worth the price we pay for it.

These Two things therefore I take to be very clear; First, that Liberty with Bounds and Limits set to it, is not Liberty of Conscience: 2 That if any other Bounds and Limits are to be set besides those which the Law hath already set, it is very requisite, indeed necessary, that those Limits should be known before admitted, agreed upon among themselves before they be desired from their Superiours. But because I very well know that how reasonable soever this way of procedure is in it self, yet that the concerned Gentlemen will find more than a few difficulties in it; I shall therefore enquire a little into the other Member of the fore-mentioned Division, and that is, such a Toleration as is unlimited.

Of unlimited Toleration.

AND here I do freely confess this, that all the Pleas which pretend to shew the reasonableness and usefulness of Liberty of Conscience do plainly prove this, if they do prove any thing at all: And the late Author of *Humane Reason* hath been so much honefter than many of the Writers upon this Argument, that he hath fairly owned the Conclusion which his Premises naturally do tend unto. Now that which here doth first offer it self to our Consideration,

deration, is this: How it doth come to pass that in this Part of the Argument the Presbyterians of late have observably been very silent? There was a time when in this Case their Zeal was as warm as any mans, and nothing in the whole World was in their esteem more frightful, more intolerable than Toleration. In the year, 1644. This Point of Indulgence was a matter of high Debate, and the Dissenters from the Presbyterian way, did desire the same Liberty from their Impositions, which they had both of them before joyned in desiring from the National Settlement; their Pretences were at least equal, they had the same Natural right to Freedom which any other men had, they had the same Pleas of Christian Liberty, and besides all this they had another very good Title, upon which they might expect Indulgence from the Presbyterians in Point of Merit; the same Arguments the Sectaries shewed to be in common between them both, and withall had this to add farther, that their Arms added that assistance, without which the Presbyterians could never have been able to have brought themselves into a condition, to have enjoyed that Liberty as to themselves, which the other Sects by their joynt concurrence did put them into a condition to grant, and therefore very well deserved to have received from them. But in those dayes, their dear Brethren, to whom they were much beholding for their joynt concurrence in Prayers and Arms; their mutual Contributions of Blood and Treasure, and whom at present they smile most

most sweetly upon, did receive the harshest usage which was in their Power to give them, and it was no small matter of publick complaint, that they were not permitted to handle them with much greater roughness: To omit many others there then came out a Book Entituled, *Wholesome Severity reconciled with Christian Liberty*, Licensed by *Ja. Cranford*, wherein we are told, that *Liberty of Heresie and Schism is no part of the Liberty of Conscience which Christ hath purchased for us, but that under these fair Colours and bandsome Pretexts Sectaries infuse their Poyson, their Pernicious, God-provoking, Truth-defacing, Church-ruinating and State-shaking Toleration.*

The Dissenters own Testimony against Toleration.

TO which Author I shall only add the more Publick Testimony to the Truth of Jesus Christ, and to our Solemn League and Covenant, as also against the Errours, Heresies, Blasphemies of these Times, and the Toleration of them, Subscribed by the Ministers of Christ within the Province of London, December 14. 1647. Which I have already mentioned, but in this part of the Argument shall insist something more largely upon; because they were such a Body of men as were looked upon as very considerable, and sufficiently qualified to speak the sence of their whole Party to great advantage: And besides that some of them are yet living and Preachers at this day

to

to the separated Congregations about the Town. Now I would fain know of these Gentlemen, whether they are of the same Judgment now about Toleration, as they were then? If they are, then methinks they should do very well to declare it, and so much the rather, because that by their behaviour one would guess that their minds were altered; in that they do so far comply, as to joyn Counsels and Interests with those whom formerly they bore Testimony against: Again, if they are of the same mind about Toleration now as they were formerly; then all the under Sects have great Cause in time to beware of them, ought to look upon them as very false Brethren, who want nothing but opportunity to take away that Liberty which now indeed is common to them with the rest of their Brethren, but they never intended it for any but themselves. And on the other side, if they are not of the same mind about Toleration now as they were formerly, then they ought in all Honesty to declare to the World how much they were formerly mistaken, in that they raised such fearful Outcries against that Toleration which is an innocent and an useful thing; the giving of which is (as it is now said) the Duty and Interest of all Government, is indeed no other than the permitting to us that Liberty with which Christ made us free, or rather, which is the Right of Nature, the Common Birth-right of all Mankind.

In the Preface to the aforesaid Testimony they
tell

tell us of the spreading Heresies and cursed Blasphemies of those Times, which had borne down the Authority of the Scriptures and our Solemn League and Covenant (very fitly joyned :) And then they add, But above all our Souls are wounded to think with what hope and industry, a Toleration of all these Evils is endeavoured, and with what a wellcomed boldness sundry odious Hereticks, which in other places have been banished and branded with infamy, do vent their poysonous Opinions amongst us; as if they intended to make England a common receptacle of all the sinful Drege of Forreign Countries as well as former Ages, pag. 29. As if all the Errours, Heresies, Sects, Schisms, Divisions, Looseness, Prophaneness, and Breach of Covenant amongst us, were small matters, what secret and publick Endeavours, Projects, Methods and Practices are there amongst us to bring in an Universal, boundless, lawless, abominable and intolerable Toleration, to the filling up of the measure of our Iniquities, and the pulling down Gods fierce indignation upon this Nation, and pag. 30. Instead of Unity and Uniformity in Matters of Religion, we are torne in pieces with destructive Schisms, Separations, Divisions, and Sub-divisions, &c. and instead of Extirpation of Heresie, Schism, Prophaneness, we have such an impudent and general inundation of all these Evils, that Multitudes are not ashamed to press and plead for a publick, formal, Universal Toleration. And having thus shewed how great their Zeal was in this Case, I shall likewise lay down their Reasons for it, which with great earnestness

earnestness they did express in these following Words, pag. 32. *A publick and a general Toleration will prove an hideous and complexive evil of most dangerous and mischievous Consequence, if ever (which God forbid) it should be consented to by Authority, for hereby, First, the Glory of the most high God, will be laid in the very dust; Secondly, the Truth of Christ, yea, all the Fundamentals of Faith will be razed to the very ground; Thirdly, all Christs Ordinances, Offices, Worship, Religion, yea and the very Power of Godliness will be utterly overthrown; Fourthly, thousands, and ten thousands of poor Souls which Christ hath ransomed with his own blood, shall be hereby betrayed, seduced, and endangered to be undone to all Eternity. Fifthly, Magistracy and Ministry, and with them all Religious, and comely Order in the Church and Common-wealth will be plucked up by the very Roots. Sixthly, Reformation in Religion, in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government shall be utterly made void. Seventhly, England shall be swallowed up with Sects, Schisms, Divisions, Disorders, and Confusions, and become an odious sink, and a common receptacle of all the prodigious Errors, Lyes, Heresies, and Blasphemies, Libertinism and Prophaneness in the World; so that Rome it self shall not be a more odious puddle and Cage of all abominations and uncleannesses. Eighthly, the Godly shall sit down and lament among us. Ninthly, the Wicked shall rise up and insult over us. Tenthly, all the Nations about us shall be amazed at us. Eleventhly, all the Reformed Churches shall be ashamed to own us, they shall*

shall all cry out against us ; Is this England that Covenanted and Swore to the most High God such a Reformation and Extirpation of Popery, Prelacy, Superstition, Heresie, Schism, Prophane-ness, and whatever shall be found contrary to sound Doctrin, and the Power of Godliness, and after so long a Travel hath she brought forth an hideous Monster of Toleration ? And again pag. 33. Hath England heretofore had such a large share of Gospel-Enjoyments ; and doth she now render to the Lord for all his Benefits a detestable Toleration ? Dost thou thus reward the Lord, O foolish England and unwise ? Twelfthly, and to conclude, seeing we have just cause to fear, that if this Toleration be entertained amongst us, the Righteous God of Heaven and Earth will be provoked to Plague us yet Seven times more, and at last to Translate his very Gospel and Kingdom from us unto another Nation : Therefore upon all these Considerations, we the Ministers of Jesus Christ do hereby testifie to all our Flocks, to all the Kingdom, to all the Reformed Churches, as our great dislike of Prelacy, Erastianism, Brownism and Independency ; so our utter abhorrency of Anti-Scripturism, Popery, Arrianism, Socinianism, Arminianism, Antinomianism, Anabaptism, Libertinism, and Familism, with all such like, now to rise amongst us.

It were endless to Transcribe all which hath been said by the Presbyterians against Toleration ; and therefore it is not a little strange, how much for some years they have endeavoured after it : But sure their separating Brethren

thens cannot be so forgetful of what hath been but so very lately past, as not to cast a very watchful Eye over them, to suspect their kindness, and be hugely jealous of their present Concurrence with them; it being not very credible, that their Moderation is greater than formerly, and that which makes all the difference is no other thing than this, That their Power is not altogether so great. It hath been no unusual thing in the World, for men to unite in their Endeavours in order to very differing Ends; to dissemble for a while their mutual Resentments, and to have less kindness for those very Persons they do cabal with, than for those whom they do cabal against. A Common Interest for a while keeps them close together, and out of that they each hope for their particular Advantages; and both sides hug and applaud inwardly their own Arts and Dexterity, in that they see the way chalked out how they shall be able to supplant their Friends, as well as ruine their Enemies. Thus the Presbyterians may at present joyn their endeavours in attaining that Liberty, which they hope in time to take away, not only from those whom they at present desire to grant it, but likewise from those who now enjoy it together with them: The Independents, Anabaptists, &c. must needs remember how the Presbyterians bore Testimony against that Toleration of them which they could not hinder: They could no more endure those who fought on their side to dissent from them, than they could those who

who fought against them. Remember (Gentlemen) you all fought for Liberty of Conscience ; and yet your Fellow-Souldiers would not allow you that which you shed your Blood for, and for their own obtaining of which, they were much more beholding to your Arms than to their own.

The Pretences of all the differing sorts of Dissenters are so vastly distant, as to be utterly inconsistent ; and whatever Correspondence is between them at present, it ought not to be looked upon, either by themselves or any one else, as any Union or Agreement which is of late made between them, but meerly as a Combination against that Settlement which they are all weary of ; and as soon as ever that is again overthrown , we shall then see that all their Old Quarrels will return as formerly : The tender Consciences of divers sizes will immediately fall as foully upon one another as ever they did : Presbytery will be stiled the Yoke of Antichrist, and Independency the Mother of Confusion ; the one will be stiled *Egypt*, and the other *Babel*.

If any Particular Sect amongst them doth desire Indulgence, and means nothing else besides a bare Permission to serve God in its own way : If there were nothing else but this in the Case, its Request then would with all Submission be put up single and by it self ; that so an account might be taken both of the Principles and of the Persons , how innocent the one, and how peaceable the other ; and what
Influence

Influence either of them are like to have upon the present Settlement either of Church or State : And surely it ought not to be looked upon either as unreasonable or assuming , if the Government doth look upon it self as concerned to have a great regard to it self both in point of Duty and in point of Safety. And in such an Enquiry as this; the Quality, Numbers, and Temper of the Petitioners for such Indulgence are of no small Consideration. And this way of Procedure , that each single Sect should speak by and for its self, and state its own particular Case , is methinks the fairest Course which can be taken; and such a one as those Dissenters, who are conscious to themselves of no ill meaning, should look upon as highly adviseable for their own sakes : It being very obvious to the most ordinary Prudence , that it may be frequently advisable upon divers particular and material Considerations, to indulge some kinds of Liberty to such and such sorts of Dissenters, which is by no means fit to allow to others; much less to allow promiscuously to all. But to take that course which they have always done since His Majesties Restauration, that they should all joyn in a common Cry, as if they had one common Cause, is very suspicious ; especially considering that they are divided among themselves in this very point of Liberty of Conscience, notwithstanding their Unanimity in calling for it.

Of Comprehension without Toleration.

SOME Rumours have of late been spread indeed all over the Town concerning such a kind of Comprehension as should leave no room for Toleration: how well grounded such Reports have been I will not undertake; it is but in vain to make an uncertain guess at what kind of Proposals may possibly be offered by some Persons, and to fancy at all adventures who they are or may be who are in any likelyhood to be concluded by them. But because it is said publickly enough and by no mean Persons, That the Presbyterians, at least the chief and leading Men amongst them, are ready now to enter into the Church, upon some reasonable Abatements to be made unto them: And when they are once gained, the other Sects will not be considerable enough to expect, that any Toleration should be allowed unto them. If this be the Case, as it is by some of themselves pretended to be, then the Case is much altered from what it lately was: *Reformed Christianity in its Latitude*, which came out in 1667. and the Defence of it in 1668. are exprefs, not only for Comprehension but likewise for Toleration, and besides that for a Connivence also. And a later Treatise Entituled, *Indulgence not to be refused; Comprehension humbly desired*, which came out 1672. in exprefs for Toleration; and against that part of his Design he makes this Objection:

Objection: The Presbyterians in former times wrote and Preached against Toleration and Indulgence, and if they do now fall in with it, they contradict themselves. To this he Answers, *That some did, some did not; and there was a Reason then which ceaseth now: And besides, many of those who declared against such a Toleration are dead and gone, and there are others Postnati to those times who now Suffer*, p. 11, 12. So that it seems, these Two Advocates for the Comprehension were for a Toleration. If the minds of these men be changed since that time, it were not unfit that they should give Publick notice of it, especially for this Reason: It is well known, that in the private Discourses and in their Printed Books, the People have been moved to express much pitty toward the Dissenters, and not a few exasperated against the Government by the perpetual noise of Persecution, Liberty, Conscience, Moderation, Forbearance, Tenderneſs, Compassion, Indulgence; and that this hath not been the peculiar Phrases of such or such a particular Sect, but the common Language of all of them. Now if this device of Comprehension do take place, then all those Pleas as to all Parties but one will remain as formerly.

*What the Presbyterians ought to do before
they be admitted into the Church by
Comprehension.*

BUT if the Presbyterians do really intend to come into the Church now, upon such and such Abatements to be made unto them, and finally and for ever to shake Hands with their old Brethren, it were but reasonable to expect that they should do these Two things: First, that in their present Meeting-Houses they should use so much of the Common-Prayer as they can Lawfully, and mean hereafter to use, and observe so many of the Orders and Ceremonies of the Church, as they are perswaded of the Innocency of; and take the first opportunity of declaring to their Hearers their Resolutions of Conformity, thereby to prepare them to Conform likewise: Secondly, they should declare, as formerly, against Liberty of Conscience, as a thing which they do by no means approve, and are resolved never hereafter to have any thing to do with. If, I say, these men do desire that any publick distinction should be made between them and other Dissenters, they themselves should do well to own such a distinction; if we go into their Conventicles, we cannot find any such great difference in the way of Worship between the Presbyterians and others, as thence to be able to distinguish them. If we go into their Company
their

their Complaints are much of the same strain, and not seldom in the same Syllables.

If there are any among them (as it is to be hoped there are) who are sincere, modest, and peaceable, who mean better than their Neighbours; The Law cannot help it if they suffer for being taken in bad Company: It is not unlikely that they might have fared much better themselves if they had not had such partakers; their own Case might have been looked upon as pitiable, if they had not joyned with such dangerous Adherents. If this Course (I say) were taken, that each Sect did urge its own Plea single, by and for it self, there were then some ground for Charity, and we might possibly have some hope, that their aims looked no higher than an Indulgence: And by so inoffensive a way of asking favour, Authority would have some ground whereupon to be perswaded, that they would use any favour which they could obtain with the very same Modesty with which they do desire it: But when they shall all unite with a joynt Consent in one and the same Clamour for that very Demand, about which themselves neither ever did, nor ever can agree; and within which Pretence no one name is wide enough to comprehend them, besides that of Non-conformity, *viz.* Dissenters from the present Constitution. Of which Dissent it is more than possible to alledge, not only divers, but contrary Reasons, and doth only tell us what it is they would not have, but not at all what they would have. It is but

70 *Pleas for Toleration Discussed.*

too evident, that Indulgence is not the only thing aimed at, but is only proposed in order to something else; and the plausible name of Conscience may upon these Terms be suspected to be only a handsome Artifice whereby to disguise that Combination, which no other word is solemn enough to Authorize, or of compass large enough to be a sufficient shelter for; and by which they hope to become a Match for some common Enemy: And accordingly as their success doth chance to happen in that, each Sect doth flatter it self with the particular Advantages to be reaped from it. And in this I am the more confirmed, because that the late Act of Parliament against Conventicles, which hath been the matter of so much Lamentation and Complaint, hath been so tender, even of the needless Scruples of Conscience, as to allow these men their own Fancies in their way of Worship in their own Families, and four of their Neighbours to joyn with them: But these Good men are Persecuted, if they are only Tolerated; they loose their ends unless they make Profelytes, and have opportunities to form themselves into Parties.

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What shall be done with the private mans Conscience, when it is inconsistent with that which the Conscience of the Governour dictates, whether of the two shall over-rule.

BUT if this Plea of Conscience be so very Omnipotent, as that it must bear all things down before it, and no other Consideration whatever must in the least presume to stand in its way: Suppose the Case should so happen, as that this Plea should become so utterly inconsistent with it self, as that it is impossible but that in one respect or other, it must necessarily be over-ruled; and this is a Case which may occur very frequently: As for Example, suppose that my Conscience tells me, that I ought to be of this or that Opinion, and not only so, but that I am obliged not only to entertain it my self, but withall to vent and propagate it to others; and on the contrary, the Magistrates Conscience tells him, that he is appointed by God to be a Keeper of both the Tables, and that it is his Duty to take care not only of Peace, but Truth; and the Doctrines which I am so very fond of are not only erroneous, but likewise of very ill consequence, both as to the Souls of men and to the publick Peace; and that to so high a degree, as that he is firmly perswaded, and as he really believes and thinks himself able to give a very good account upon

weighty grounds, that he should be much wanting, both to the Duty which he oweth to God, and the Care which he ought to take of his People, both as to their Temporal and Eternal Welfare, if he doth not make use of his Authority in the restraining me from venting any such pernicious Doctrines within this Dominions.

What now is to be done in this Case? My Conscience tells me, that I am obliged to Preach such and such Doctrines, as being precious and Soul-saving ones, the Truths of God and Gospel-discoveries; the Kings Conscience tells him, that they are the Doctrines of Devils (as *St. Paul* did upon occasion declare some Doctrines to be) and that he ought not to give me Liberty to Preach any such in his Kingdom: What now is to be done in this Case? Here is Conscience on both sides; the King is as firmly perswaded as I am, and thinks himself as well informed as I either am or can be; If the King restrains me from Preaching after my own way, then I cry out that he is a Persecutor: He replies, that I am a Seducer, nay, a Blasphemer, and he neither will nor ought to suffer any such in his Countries; either his Conscience or mine must over-rule; Both cannot be satisfied; one or other must necessarily either yield or alter; or else I must Preach, and he must Punish, and the Almighty must at his own time be Judge between us; and in the mean time as to all the purposes of this World, the Kings Conscience hath reason to expect to be more Authoritative than

than mine, and withall he is concerned to take care both of himself and all other men, to Judge both as to his own particular, and likewise as to the Concerns of His whole Nation.

If it be replied in this Case, that the Kings Conscience ought to yield, because it is an Errour in Him to think that He is at all concerned in Points of this Nature; that Religion is no part of His Care, His business is only to look after the Civil Government, and the Publick Peace (a Pretence frequently insisted on:) The Answer to this is very plain, and might easily be enlarged upon, as to many Particulars, I shall only mention these Two Things.

Religion hath very great Influences upon the Peace of any Government.

First, That Religion hath a very great Influence upon Civil Government, and the Publick Peace; and therefore if so be that the Civil Government, and the Publick Peace be within His Care; then Religion ought by no means to be excluded from it, as having so great an Influence upon it. In the next place, as to the Pretence that the Magistrate is in an Errour, if he looks upon himself as concerned in this Particular; it is more than possible, that that very Pretence will upon Examination appear to be the greater Errour: And in general the Subject is no more free from Errour than the Sovereign. And this need not seem News to
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us of this Age and Nation ; and to speak the Truth, it is no easie matter to find out any Age or Nation, where it hath not been sadly Evidenced, that Seducers will quickly be found in great abundance, where Liberty hath been given for the People to be Seduced by them : And after all this , it will be no impossible Task to make out, that Magistrates are obliged not only in Interest, but likewise in point of Conscience, to have a great Care of Religion; and to use that Authority which they received from God, so far to the honour of him who gave it, as by no means to suffer his Truths to lye all openly exposed to all the Lusts, Designs, and Mistakes of Men ; to all the Knavery and all the Folly of Every one who is either willing to deceive, or liable to be deceived. And of this I shall now endeavour to give a brief account both from Reason and Scripture, the Necessity of the thing, and the Authority both of the Old and New Testament.

Magistrates, not alone in point of Interest but Conscience, are to have great care of Religion.

BUT here a great many Rubs are thrown in our way, by the fore-mentioned Author of *Liberty of Conscience upon its true and proper Grounds asserted and Vindicated: Proving that no Prince nor State ought by force to compel men to any Part of the Doctrine, Worship or Discipline of* the

the Gospel. London, Printed in the year, 1668. Which methinks is not very different from the Doctrine of the *Bloody Tenent* Dedicated to both Houses of Parliament in the year 1644. It is the *Will and Command* of God, that (since the coming of his Son *Jesus*) a *Permission* of the most *Paganish, Jewish, Turkish, or Antichristian Consciences and Worship*s be granted to *All men in all Nations and Countries*. But whatever the Assertion of our Author is either in it self, or in its Consequence, I shall briefly enquire into the Arguments he brings for it. Pag. 25. *That the Civil and Ecclesiastical Power are things perfectly in themselves distinct, and ought in their Exercise to be kept so, &c.* And, the Magistrate hath ways, such as *Christ* thought sufficient, to promote the Good of Religion, and propagating the Growth of the Gospel, without drawing the *Civil Sword*, which will make no more Impression in the *Spiritual Concerns*, than it will do upon a Ghost which hath no real Body, &c. And p. 28. To use force in Religion is wholly unlawful in any hand whatever; because it is by no means appointed by *Christ* to bring about any Gospel-End: For the Magistrate to enforce the *Laws* of the Gospel by *Temporal Power*, or to compel Men into the Gospel by such a Power, is to act without the least Precept or Precedent; to induce an Engine to Execute the Gospel contrary to the nature of *Christ's Kingdom* (which is not of this World) and contrary to the nature of all Gospel-Institutions. Doth not Paul positively deliver this, That the *Weapons* of the Gospel are not Carnal but *Spiritual*, and mighty thorough God: The Sword
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of the Spirit is the Weapon by which Christ doth all; yea, by which he will destroy Antichrist, the greatest Gospel-Enemy the World hath produced. The Sum of which is briefly this: 1. That Force is a very incompetent Method to be used in matters of Belief and Perswasion: 2. That it is unlawful. 1. Because Christ hath no where commanded it, we have neither Precept nor Precedent for it: 2. Because St. Paul hath plainly forbid it, where he says that the Weapons of our Warfare are not Carnal.

*Objections and Authorities against this,
Answered.*

NOW, as to these Suggestions which do frequently recur in this Question, I shall at present only briefly touch upon them, premising this, That our Author, like to all the rest who have dealt in this Cause, is as much concern'd to answer these and all the rest of his Arguments against using the Secular Interposition in matters of Belief, as any of those he writes against; because he himself doth very much approve and commend such Interposition where he likes the Cause in behalf of which it is made use of. Now, though this may seem strange, because it is directly contrary to his whole Book, yet it is very plain; and I shall not expect to be believed upon my bare word, but desire the Author himself, or any one besides who makes a doubt of it, to consider these words which we
have

have pag. 24. *Constantine and the Christian Emperours after him, till the Church of Rome had cheated them into Subjection, took upon them the care and over-sight of all Religious things: amongst our selves we reap the advantage of our Kings and Princes care and Concern in that enjoyment we have of the Protestant Religion.* Now this Assertion of that Learned Gentleman is evidently true; but then it happens here as it useth in the other Discourses for Toleration: When the Evidence of Truth hath forced from them one reasonable Concession, that one Concession doth plainly give away from them nothing less than their whole Cause: For, pray tell me, *Constantine and the Christian Emperours* are here commended for their care and over-sight in Religious things; and so our own Kings for securing to us the Protestant Religion: Now was not all this done by Laws and Penalties, and the Civil Sword, and was there any possibility of having it done any other way?

Of the use of force in propagating Religion.

THIS being premised, as to the Exceptions themselves, I briefly say this; If no force is to be used in matters of Religion, because it is an incompetent Method, as being able to reach only to the Body and Estate, but is by much too weak to reach unto the Mind; this is a Difficulty not at all peculiar to the Gospel, but common to
that

that with all other Dispensations. The Mind of a Man was as much a Spirit under the Law as it can be now; and the Sword was made of as meer Matter in those days, as it can be in these: and therefore thus far the Case is one and the same. As to the Second Exception, That all Force is now unlawful, because Christ hath not commanded it, they have been told, and have had it proved to them too in many parts of the Puritan Controversie, that many things are lawful which there is no particular Command for; that a thing becomes unlawful, not by being not commanded, but by being forbidden: And this leads me directly to the Third Exception, That all Force is plainly forbidden by *St. Paul*, when he says, *2 Cor. 10. v. 4. That the Weapons of our Warfare are not Carnal.*

Of that Text, 2 Cor. 10. The Weapons of our Warfare are not Carnal.

NOW this saying of the Apostle is so far from being a Prohibition of all Coercion in the Affairs of Religion, that it doth plainly refer to a very great Coercion, which himself did in these very words threaten for to use, *viz.* the Censures of the Church in such a manner as to carry Temporal Penalties along with them, in manner miraculous, visible and extraordinary: And therefore it followeth in the next words, that those Weapons which in themselves might

might be supposed weak, yet if they were better looked into would be found to have a strength from God, which they had not from themselves; for they were not *meerly Carnal*, but *mighty through God for the bringing down strong holds*: And to render it clear that these words have a penal meaning in them, it follows, that these Weapons are able to cast down imaginations, and every high thought that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every thought to the Obedience of Christ: And to put it out of all doubt, that those Weapons had a coercive power in them, the Apostle adds, in a stile much beyond exhortation and advice, nay, much beyond a bare reproof, that in the strength of them *he would revenge all disobedience*.

That Objection, Force may not be used in pulling down Antichrist, therefore not in propagating Religion, retorted.

AND as for the last most pressing and convincing Consideration, That if Force was to be used in any affair of Religion at all, it was of all others the most to be justified in order to the pulling down of Antichrist, the greatest of all other Gospel-Enemies: But even in that Case it ought not to be used, and therefore most certainly not in any other; *The Sword of the Spirit being the only Weapon by which Christ will destroy Antichrist, the greatest Gospel-Enemy which*
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the World bath produced. I shall not here take an advantage which I have already mentioned, that *the Sword of the Spirit* doth in Scripture signifie something which carries Coercion along with it; but shall be contented that that word be understood in the common meaning of it: And upon that Supposition I believe that this Assertion of this Learned Gentleman will scarce pass for true Doctrine in the Separated Congregations; I am sure that there was a time when it would not have done so, and I never yet heard that in this Point their Minds were altered: How unlawful soever it may be for the Magistrate to make use of the Civil Sword in a Cause of Religion; I am sure that it hath been often Preached as a great Gospel-Duty, though in a Rebellion, to make use of the Military one. We have not forgot how often the Zeal of the Common People was inflamed against the King, by telling them that the Cause then fought for was the Cause of God, that their Persons and Estates were all too little to be Sacrificed in this Concern of Religion, and the question really was, whether Christ or Anti-Christ should be King? And so I return to our Author.

Amongst all the Arguments which are brought to prove the Compulsory Power of the Magistrate under the Gospel, the greatest weight is laid upon the practice of the Kings of Israel and Judah, and what they did under the Law in compelling men to the Worship of God then Established. In the due Consideration whereof we shall find the truth in hand no ways

ways invalidated, and that what was then done by the Kings of Israel and Judah, cannot reasonably be now made a Rule to Magistrates under the Gospel: And that the Analogy will no way hold, may be made appear both from the different station and posture those Kings were in from all Magistrates now, and also from the different Condition of the Church then and now, and many Circumstances peculiarly relating to both. First, the Worship and Policy of the Jews, being in it self Typical, and representative of what was to come hereafter, their Government was likewise so, and in their Kings very eminently. Secondly, God was pleased in those Times upon all eminent Occasions of Reformation in his Worship and Proceedings of that Nature to send Prophets to declare his positive Mind, and to put an end to all Doubts; that could be about such things: Nay, some of the Kings themselves were Prophets immediately inspired, and did not only take care of the Worship established by Moses, but did themselves by Divine Authority bring in things of a new Institution into the Worship of God. Thus David did, and Solomon in bringing Musick into the Temple, and settling the Courses of the Priests, and were Divinely inspired to write part of the Holy Scriptures: No Magistrate now can pretend to any such power in themselves, nor have they any such extraordinary direction to guide them; but are punctually obliged to whatever Christ hath revealed in the Gospel: And therefore in this respect the Analogy holds no way good.

*Of the Argument drawn from the Example
of the Kings of Israel or Judah.*

THE sum of all which is, that no Argument ought to be drawn from the Examples of the Kings of *Israel* or *Judah*, whereby to prove the Power of any present Magistrates over the Affairs of Religion; by reason of the great difference between those Magistrates and ours, especially in these Two respects: First, that they were Typical: Secondly, that in such Cases they had either Prophets sent to them, or themselves were Divinely inspired.

And in this part of the Argument, if I had a mind to enlarge farther than I needs must, I believe that I should find it an easie matter, to find our Author to have committed sundry mistakes in assigning the Difference between the State of the Church, and the Condition of Magistrates, as it was under the Law; I shall not dispute whether the Lawfulness of the Magistrates using Coercive power under the Law was Typical of this, that such Coercive power should not be lawful under the Times of the Gospel: But in the Second place I shall venture to say this, that several of the Constitutions made by the *Jewish* Kings, were such as stood in no need either of direction from Prophets Commissioned for that purpose, or any immediate Inspiration given in to them themselves; And in this part of the Debate I shall go no farther than

than the Instances which our Author here layes down, of bringing Musick into the Temple, the setting of the Priests Courses, Two things certainly which without Inspiration, common prudence would abundantly serve to assist any man in.

Testimonies out of Scripture for the Magistrates Authority in using Force for the propagating Religion.

BUT to shew how little need there is to insist upon any thing of this, I shall produce an instance of the Magistrates Coercive power in Matters of Religion, which shall not be liable to any of all these, however frivolous exceptions, as having in it not any thing peculiar to the Ordinances of *Moses*. And I shall fetch it out of the Book of *Job* c. 31. v. 26, 27, 28. *If I beheld the Sun when it shined, or the Moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my Hand, this also were an iniquity to be punished by the Judges, &c.* Here now is an offence purely Spiritual, a Crime meerly against Religion, not any otherwise at all against the State, or any particular Member of it; a sin indeed it was against God, but such an one as did consist in a meer mistake about him, and such a mistake as was in that Age and part of the World very frequently committed; and yet it is said to be an *Iniquity to be punished by the Judges*. So that it seems in the dayes of

Job, the Civil Magistrate was thought to have in himself a power, and was concerned to look upon it as a Duty incumbent upon himself, to take care not only of the safety of Himself and His People, but likewise to look after the Honour of Almighty God.

Now whatever may be pretended for that Natural Liberty, which every man is now adays supposed to have a full right to, to be permitted the enjoyment of his own way of Worship, we do find that things of this Nature were before the Dayes of *Moses*, and without Relation to any of his Laws, under the Restraint and Authority of Superiours, who were to be in this as well as in any other Affairs, not only Guides but Governours. I suppose that without breach of Modesty, a man may with some Confidence affirm, that if it had not been within the due bounds of that Power which of right did belong to *Abraham*, that it would never have been Recorded for his everlasting Honour by God himself, *That he would command his Children and Household after him to keep the way of the Lord, not only advise or exhort, but Command*, as we have it, *Gen. 18. 19.* And *Abraham's* Family was so large, as that *Gen. 23. 6.* He is stiled a *Mighty Prince*. And in this place we are to consider that it is very plain, that every one of all those Arguments, which do assert Liberty of Conscience by way of Right so far as to exempt Religion from the Authority of the Magistrate, do, at least with equal force exempt it from the Authority of Parents, Masters, or who ever else besides:

For

For this must needs be very evident, that if this Liberty be such a natural indefeasable right, as that no humane Power whatever can take it away from us; then as the Regal Power cannot take it away, so for the same Reason neither can the Paternal or Despotical: Nay farther, if so be that these Pretenders are in the Right, and that such a Liberty in Matters of Religion, and the Profession of that Liberty be one part of Liberty, with which Christ hath made us free, and which we are accordingly called upon to stand fast in, as being purchased for us by our Redeemer's Blood, then the same Argument doth return upon us again at least with equal, if not with greater force; for as the King ought not to deprive us of any degree of that Liberty with which Christ made us free; so neither ought any Parent or Master presume to do any such thing; and Liberty of Conscience must upon these Terms receive as little interruption in Families as in Kingdoms: No Imposition must upon these terms be endured in any House, School, or Colledge, as to Forms or hours of Prayer, no Words, no nor no Gestures must be prescribed; every Child or Servant hath the free Liberty to remonstrate in behalf of this invaluable and frequently insisted on Priviledge, that no man must dare to determine what Christ hath left free, for in Christ there is no difference of any Age or Quality, high and low in him are all alike.

The Apostles when they were brought to Answer before the Governours of that time, did not deny their Authority.

THE chief, if not only ground of mistake in this particular is this, that in the New Testament we have not an Example of a Civil Magistrate exercising his Civil Power in defence of the Gospel: Now that which renders this Exception utterly insignificant, is this, that in the New Testament we do not read of any Civil Magistrate who was a Christian. And nothing can be plainer than this, that the Magistrates which then were, did look upon Religion as a thing within their Cognizance, and accordingly, as they did not believe the Doctrine of the Gospel to be true, they did call them to account who did either profess or propagate it: And if this had been one alteration which the Gospel had brought into the World, that from henceforth Religion, contrary to the Sentiments of all former Ages, should be absolutely exempt from the Cognizance of any Magistrate, and that every Mans Conscience was so Sacred, as that God alone was fit to be the Judge of it; it is not a little to be wondred at, that in this new *Epocha* and strange alteration of Affairs, the Apostles did take no manner of notice of this change, and when they had so fair Opportunities and proper seasons; as when they themselves were called in Question about Matters of Religion, did never in

in the least insert this in their Apologies, that Religion was no part of the Civil Magistrates business: When *St. Paul* was Questioned about Heresie, he made no such exception against the Tribunal he was called before; that Heresie was a thing which they had nothing to do to enquire about, but gave them an Account that the Doctrine which he Preached was not Heresie.

And that we may root up the very Foundation of all mistakes in this matter, it is very evident, that amongst all the Precepts which we meet with in the New Testament, concerning Moderation, Condescension, bearing with one anothers Infirmities, it is very evident, that not any one of them hath any manner of Relation to our great Idol of Liberty of Conscience; they being plainly given to private Persons, and many times in relation only to their own passions, and where not so limited to certain Cases, occasional emergencies, and with a clear reference to their not having as yet time or opportunity of being sufficiently instructed: But as for the Governours of the Church they are sufficiently called upon to watch over their respective Flocks, and to take care that Wolves do not break in upon them, they are called upon to exercise the whole power with which they were intrusted, *viz.* the power of Excommunication, a thing which comes so near the Question now in Debate, that it was not seldom assisted with temporal penalties: And though it is often suggested in this Argument, that the Outward Sword can Act no more upon the mind of men than upon a Ghost, yet

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St. Paul, 1 Cor. 5. 5. was of the Opinion, that the Destruction of the Flesh (a Phrase well known to signifie Diseases, and such like inflictions on the Body) was a very likely method by which the Spirit might at length come to be saved. The Soul and the Body though of a distant Nature have so near an Union, such Common Interests, and so great an influence one upon another, that what doth affect the one, the other cannot choose but be so far concerned in, as at the least to consider it: And this is obvious to the most ordinary Experience, and hath seldom failed of a great Effect, whenever it hath been made trial of. And if it were not so, it would not only supercede all correction in Religious Affairs, but in Civil ones likewise.

Universal Toleration contrary to Scripture.

NOW that any such kind of Liberty of Conscience was brought into the World by the Revelation of the Gospel, as that every one should henceforward without controul profess and propagate what opinion soever he either did really or would pretend to believe, I take to be a thing so far from being according to the Rule of the New Testament, that I must profess myself to be very much mistaken, if so be that this thing be not contrary not only to some few Texts, but to a considerable part of the whole Design of it. In the Fourth of the *Ephesians*,

v. 14. we read of several Orders and Degrees of Men instituted and appointed for this very purpose, that they might take care of *the perfecting the Saints, the work of the Ministry, the edifying the Body of Christ*; that we be henceforth no more Children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the *slight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lye in wait to deceive*. Now is it credible that an unbounded License for all manner of Opinions, was ever intended by St. Paul to be a thing to be looked upon, as being according to the mind of Christ; who tells us of a whole Order of Men appointed by Christ, whose Duty it should be to take care, that men should not be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine? And this Consideration will be of so much the greater force both as to the Care which ought to be taken of Souls, and withal as to the Ends of Government, and all the purposes of Humane Life: If we do but keep in mind the Caution which is here given us by the Apostle, that every thing is not Gold that glisters; that fair pretences may have very ill Designs lodged under them: The being tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine, is it self certainly a very great Evil and of very ill consequence. But the deluded persons themselves have one good Preservative against it, when they are by such an Infallible Authority forewarn'd and assured, that this doth frequently come to pass *by the slight of men and the cunning craftiness whereby they lye in wait to deceive*: Now in this Case I would appeal to
common

common Sense, whether it be a thing adviseable upon the scores either of Piety or Prudence, that such deceivers should have an unbounded Liberty, to seduce all those whom at any time they shall be able to impose upon? It is plain that *St. Paul* was so far from being of this mind, that he calls upon the Ecclesiastical Officers in this Case to make use of the highest Censures which they were entrusted with, *I wish they were cut off that trouble you, Gal. 5. 12.* Now I would fain know whether when this which our Apostle doth advise is done, that according to the Rules of Scripture, any one or more are cast out of the Communion of the Church upon the account of Corruption either in Doctrine or Manners, it be agreeable to common Sense, that this Person or Persons, so cast out of the Church according to the Rules above supposed, should in the same Kingdom, nay, in the same Parish, have a right to set up another? That being cut off as a rotten Member from one Church, he may from thence assume the Priviledge to create himself the Pastor of another, which he no doubt will be forward enough to tell us is a much purer one.

Now the want of exercising the Censures of the Church in this very Case of false Doctrine we find to be a thing highly blame worthy, *Rev. 2. 14.* where it is said to the Angel of the Church of *Pergamus*, *I have a few things against thee, because thou hast them who hold the Doctrine of Balaam; and vers. 15. Thou hast them who hold the Doctrine of the Nicolaitans:* Now the Govern-

our of this Church is not charged in the least that he himself did hold these false Doctrines, but that there are those within his Communion who do hold them; as again the complaint is renewed, v. 20. to another Angel, *I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that Woman Jezebel, which calleth her self a Prophetess, to teach and Seduce my Servants to commit Fornication, and to eat things Sacrificed to Idols.* From all which it is very plain, that this Natural or Christian Right of propagating whatever Opinion men do chance, or fancy, or pretend to be of, was a thing which St. John was utterly unacquainted with, and blames the Governours of the Church for suffering a false Prophetess to teach and Seduce the Souls committed to their Charge.

And let any reasonable man consider with himself, whether the condition of the Common people be not lamentably expos'd to innumerable and unaccountable Dangers, if so be that by publick Authority they shall lye exposed to every one to deceive, who can and will. St. Paul, 2 Tim. 2. 17. gives us notice of some Hereticks of his time, *whose words do eat as doth a Canker;* he names the Men and the Doctrines, *Hymeneus and Philetus, who say that the Resurrection is past already and overthrow the Faith of some:* and this Doctrine of theirs by the benefit of Liberty of Conscience hath been Preached since their dayes; and as often soever as that time shall come which St. Paul doth so much bewail, 2 Tim. 4. 3. *That men will not endure sound Doctrine, but after their own*

own Lusts heap to themselves Teachers, having itching ears. Authority will be found useful as well as Instruction and Government be needful as well as Exhortation.

In the Second Epistle of St. Peter, c. 2. v. 1, 2, 3. we read of *false Prophets and false Teachers who shall privily bring in damnable Heresies*; the consequence of which is there said to be very dreadful both to themselves and others, *They shall bring upon themselves swift destruction*: But this is not all, for this kind of infection is not only fatal but contagious; as it is expressed, v. 2. *Many shall follow their pernicious wayes.* Now if errors are so pernicious to the Souls of men, and withal of a very spreading nature, is it a thing adviseable that there should be an unbounded License for entertaining and receiving, spreading and propagating them? And this consideration will appear evidently to be the more forcible, if we withal remember, that it is more than possible, that Doctrines in themselves false, may be known to be false by the men who teach them; and with great art and demureness many may endeavour to perswade others to those things of which themselves are not really perswaded. And let no man look upon this as any harsh or uncharitable Censure of mine; for it is so far from being a suggestion of mine, that it is in expresse terms taught by the Apostle, v. 3. *Thorough Covetousness shall they with feigned words make Merchandize of you*: So that Heresie may be a solemn way of setting up for a Cheat; Separation a very gainful Trade; the getting a Meeting-

Meeting-House, a Religious Method of setting up a Shop, where the more numerous and ignorant his Auditors (otherwise called his Chapmen) are, so much the more it is in his power to put off what Wares he will, and to set what prices he pleaseth upon them.

And thus I think I have made it somewhat plain, from the New Testament, that that Liberty of Conscience, which of late hath so often been called for, is nothing like any part of that Christian Liberty which the Writers of that Book did ever think of; that they themselves did exercise, and require of others to exercise the whole Ecclesiastical Power in points of Doctrine as well as Manners; and that was the whole Power they were intrusted with; that this Power of theirs, though in it self wholly Spiritual, was yet by an immediate interposition of God attended upon with Temporal Penalties, and by the Apostles known and intended so to be. So that in this Case it happened to them in Vindicating their Authority, as it did in another in the exercise of their Charity; they could not give the poor man who begged at the Gate of the Temple Money; but they could give him the use of his Limbs; they had no Silver nor Gold, but what was much better they had; they could say, *Rise up and Walk*: So in this Case they had not in those dayes the Sword of the Magistrate; but when it was seasonable they made it evident, that the want of that was abundantly supplied by the Sword of God.

Now

Now all this being premised, there is very little need certainly for men to require a particular express Precept for the Power of the Civil Magistrate in Matters of Religion; seeing the Authority of the Civil Magistrate over the Affairs which related to the Worship of God was acknowledged and exercised over all the World; the Original of which practice we find to be of as early Date as Magistracy it self. It is notorious, that the Kingly and the Priestly Office was of old in one and the same Person; and when by the appointment of God, they came to be separated, there is not the least shew that this Separation was made out of any favour to Liberty of Conscience; nor the least insinuation that holy things should for all Ages and Dispensations to come be looked upon as no part of the Princes care: Nay, this is so far from being any thing like the Case, that in that very Nation, wherein that Separation was made, the Civil Power did all along retain the Right and did frequently use that Right of his in interposing authoritatively in Religious Affairs: And he did do this both by the appointment of God, and at other times without any especial appointment but by his Original Right of Magistracy, when there was an Exigency of Affairs which did require it; Nay, and in Matters of outward Order, and the more decent Celebration of Divine Offices, he did not alwayes tye himself to the express Rule of the Written word, but according to his own Prudence; and what he did thus without especial Commission is in Scripture

Recorded

Recorded with great approbation. The Instances are too well known to stand in need of being insisted on.

The Magistrate by becoming Christian, if he hath no Addition, hath yet no diminution of his Power.

OUR forementioned Author tells us, p. 13. *That a Magistrate, by becoming a Christian, hath no addition of power to what he had before, which is readily granted him ; let him have but so much, and he will stand in need of no more. They who exempt all Affairs of Religion from the Authority of the Magistrate, must prove that Christ did take much from his Authority, viz. the whole cognizance of Sacred things, a Power known to have been used by Jews as well as Gentiles. And however the Clergy have been frequently and falsely traduced in this particular, that in order to Ends of their own they have flattered Princes with a Power, which really did not belong to them. It is well known that the Writers of Politicks have asserted this Prerogative of Princes as earnestly as the Divines have done: Instances would here be endless ; I shall therefore shew you the thing granted by a known Schollar, but no Divine by Profession, and that is the Excellent Grotius, Omnes (saith he) qui de Republica aliquid lectu dignum scripsere, hoc jus in sacra non partem summi Imperii, sed etiam potissimam atque præcipuam vocant, de Imperio, C. I. p. 14.*

Now

Now I must needs confess that our forementioned Author doth, p. 22, 23. not only assert the Princes Power in Matters of Religion, but proves it very well; and at last concludes, that it is a great weakness to think otherwise: But then he adds, p. 24. *That the Prince must by no means in this Case use the Sword*; and having said this, he seems a little suspicious, as if that Limitation had quite spoiled his whole Concession, as indeed it doth. But his wonted courage doth immediately return again; *Nor need it seem strange that the Magistrate should have the care and oversight of that where he is not to use the Temporal Power, &c.* Now, I think, it is not easie to be imagined what effectual Care the Magistrate can take but that; our Author tells us indeed of another way, viz. *He is to see it done by the Spiritual means which Christ hath appointed*, p. 24. But if this be all which he may do, this may be too little: For suppose those Spiritual Weapons do meet with such Persons, who do slight, undervalue and stand in open defiance of them; doth all that concern and care, which our Author, but one Page before, asserts the Magistrate to be intrusted with, in looking after the Honour of God and the Souls of men, amount to no more but barely this, That he is to see the Spiritual Censures of the Church made use of; and if men have no more Religion than to despise and Laugh at them, he is to stand still and look on while they are so doing? This Learned Gentleman confesseth and contends for it, that *the Magistrate is in his Station bound*

bound to take care of Gods Honour, p. 23. and yet throughout his whole Book he is ever afterward very zealous, that he must by no means use the Sword in order to it : Now, how a Magistrate can *in his Station* act, where this is interdicted him, is a thing not easily apprehended. When a Magistrate, as such, declares his pleasure, common Sense tells us, that the meaning is, that if we do not bear a fitting regard to that his Declaration, it must be at our own peril; and without this I do not apprehend how his Authority doth appear to be any greater than that of any other man.

Again, if the King be to Govern the People, Religion must then be a very considerable part of his Care, as being a thing wherein his Government will find it self to be very frequently and very highly concerned ; there being nothing more evident nor experienced than this, that according to the right or wrong measures which may be taken of Religion, the People may be wrought upon to do either very much good or very much evil, even as to the Affairs of this Life : There are not a few Doctrines, which this Nation is no Stranger to, which if a Prince hath not Power to forbid the spreading of, God shall be extreemly dishonoured, himself be in a fair way to be deposed, and his Subjects ruined ; and he shall plainly see all this, and upon these mens terms not in the least be able to help it : And this naturally leads me to our next Consideration, the many great inconveniencies which attend Liberty of Conscience

H

both

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both in Relation to Religion and Government, the Worship of God, and the Publick Peace.

But before I enter upon this Part of the Argument, I must again return so far back, as to take some notice of that common rumour about the Town, of such a Project in hand as will (if the success can be supposed to answer the great hopes which are conceived of it) make all that Labour needless, and that is the forementioned Comprehension: In behalf of which the undertakers are said usually and openly to alledge this, that if that be yielded to, there will be then no need at all of Toleration; for, by that means the Church will be so strong by the accession of her new Friends, that she may safely contemn, and by their help easily overcome all her other Enemies; and withall they are Persons already so very near us, that there are none but inconsiderable matters in debate between us; for they allow Episcopacy, approve the Liturgy, abhor Sacriledge, believe our Articles, and already can and often do communicate in our Publick Worship.

Of that smallness of Difference, that is pretended between us and the Presbyterians.

NOW as plausible and taking soever this Plea is, yet methinks that there is no one part of it which doth not carry something of wonder in it. First, it is well known that there was a time when the Presbyterians did joyn with, invite, encourage, and protect all other Sectaries, that by their Assistance they might be enabled to ruine the Church; and therefore it ought to be well considered upon, by what means it is brought about, that their Minds come now to be so far altered as that they will now joyn with the Church in the Suppression of all the other Sects: Nay, and very lately the leading Persons of that way did joyn Interests with the Papists, and mutually engage for assistance to each other in stopping of Bills in Parliament preparing against Both of them.

In the next place, if the difference between us and them are so inconsiderable, as they pretend, then surely there was no need of the last War upon any Religious Account. There was no need of that grievous complaint against some of those Things which a Preacher at this Day in *Aldersgate-street* made before a Mock-Parliament, September 24. 1656. Praised be that God who hath delivered us from the Imposition of Prelatical Innovations, *Altar-genu-flections*, and *Cringings*.

with Crossings, and all that Popish Trash and Trumpery: And truly (I speak no more than what I have often thought and said) the removal of those insupportable burthens countervails ALL THE BLOOD and Treasure shed and spent in these late Distractions (nor did I as yet ever hear of any godly men that desired, were it possible, to purchase their Friends or Money again at so dear a rate, as with the return of these, to have those Soul-burthening Anti-Christian Yokes re-imposed upon us: And if any such there be, I am sure that that desire is no part of their Godliness, and I profess my self in that to be none of the Number: Here we see that Mr. Jenkins is very positive and expresse in the Case; that the differences are so great between us, that all the Blood shed, whether in the Field or on the Scaffold, was all little enough to be shed in order to the removal of so great Evils; and yet there was shed in this Quarrel the Blood of the King, many of the Nobles and Gentry, and of vast numbers of all other Ranks, Orders and Degrees amongst us: If the Differences between us be so inconsiderable, as it is now said, then methinks there was but little cause for that great zeal of Mr. Calamy's, which he exprest in Guild-Hall, October 6. 1643. in order to the perswading the City unto a liberal Contribution toward bringing in the Scots, in order to the preservation of the Gospel, as he several times expresth himself in that Speech, as if the Differences were in his esteem, and in the esteem of that Grave and Reverend Assembly of Ministers there present with him, so very considerable, that the
chief

chief concerns of the Gospel did depend upon them ; and accordingly he made use of this pretence as his chief Art , whereby to wheedle the City out of their Money at that time : *Let me tell you, if ever (Gentlemen) you might use this Speech, O happy Penny, you may use it now, happy Money that will purchase my Gospel, happy Money that will purchase Religion, and purchase a Reformation to my Posterity ; O happy Money and Blessed be God that I have it to lend :* So that it seems these Gentlemen have two measures which upon different occasions they do make use of : When they have a mind to Collogue with Authority, then the differences between them and the regular Clergy are mere trifles and very inconsiderable ; but when there is a season offered, wherein it is safe to animate and inflame the People, then the differences are of that moment, that no Treasure, no Blood is sufficient to be laid out in a Debate of that Concernment, or in the Words of the forementioned Speech : *If I had as many Lives as I have Hairs on my Head, I would be willing to Sacrifice all these Lives in this Cause :* Lastly, if the Differences between us be so very small, sure there can be no great cause for their present obstinate Separation.

But if these men are really and in good earnest desirous of coming into the Church. It is very fit that in order to that they should declare whether they will leave those Principles which have hitherto divided them from it, or whether they are resolved to entertain those Principles still, or any of them : If they will leave their Principles,

the Churches Armes are open to receive and to embrace them; but if they mean to ret^{ain} in their Principles, or any of them, their room may be more desirable than their Company; for upon those terms the difference is in no likelihood to amount to any more than this, that instead of remaining in a Schism from the Church, they will thereby be inabled to make a Schism within it; or if they are at length brought to be perswaded to part with any of their Principles, will they be so Honest as to declare that they have been so far mistaken, and desire their Followers to get out of those Snares which they in former Dayes did lay for them; and particularly will they Renounce the Covenant? It was very good Advice which the Right Reverend Father in God the Lord Bishop of *Winchester* gave His Majesty, in his Epistle before the Coronation Sermon, when he reminded Him of that wise Resolution of His Royal Grandfather, *Henry the Fourth*, *That he was ready at any time to make a Peace with any of the Leaguers, but he would never make any Peace with the League.*

A Comparison between the Severities used now against the Covenant, and those used by them in imposing it.

NOW if they look upon it as any hard measure that they should be called upon to Renounce the Covenant: Let them not at all wonder, 'if the Regular Sons of the Church have not forgot those rigours with which it was imposed, the many mitchiefs which have been wrought, and are something apprehensive of those mischiefs which may at this day be wrought by it; if so be that the Renunciation of it should be laid aside; which will certainly be interpreted as at least a tacit Confession, that that Injunction was unreasonable, and such a one as a man of a tender Conscience could not submit to; and that is a fair preparation for the Opinion that the Covenant is really a thing which doth oblige us. But because that Moderation is at this time a word much in fashion; let us compare the Severities used in behalf of the Covenant with this which is so much complained of as being against it: It is indeed, by reason of the Clamours by themselves raised about its Obligation, Established by a Law, that none shall be admitted to Publick Trusts in Universities, Schools, or the Church, who will not Renounce its Obligation; but the Covenanters did not think this a sufficient security in that Case; Mr. Calamy tells us in his fore-mentioned

Speech, in the name of himself and the Reverend Ministers with him, with great Joy and Triumph; *That there was not one Person in the Kingdom of Scotland who is not a Covenanter, and there shall not one abide amongst them who will not take this Covenant.* Now this Mr. Calamy, from the beginning of the Long Parliament, till the Day of his Death, was a Ring-leader of that Party of men who do now plead for Comprehension, and do earnestly at this time desire that they may be dispensed with, for Renouncing the Covenant. And if the Counsel of these Divines had been of as great Authority in the Army, as it was with the Two Houses, that which Mr. Calamy doth magnifie in *Scotland* would have been a pattern for the same course to be taken in *England*.

But seeing that the Covenant is more sacred with them than the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, will they, if they should be thus far condescended to, be so grateful to His Majesty, as to declare their Opinions against the War raised against His Father? Will they in lieu of Renouncing the Covenant take an Oath wherein they will assert, that the War raised by some Lords and Gentlemen sitting at *Westminster*, under the Name of the Lords and Commons Assembled in Parliament, by a Commission granted to *Robert Earl of Essex*, was unlawful, as being against the known Laws both of God and of the Nation? If they refuse this, seeing that we know that many of these very men for whom Comprehension is desired did

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Preach up the War, if they will not declare against it, it is shrewdly to be suspected that their mind is the same as formerly, and the only change which is, is in the posture of Affairs.

How far they approve of Episcopacy and Liturgy.

BUT because it is now said in behalf of these men, that they allow Episcopacy, and approve of a Liturgy, nay of ours: That we may not be imposed upon by any ambiguous generality of Words; it is but requisite that in this they would declare particularly in what sense it is that they allow and approve both these things; for if by things past we may guess at things present; by Episcopacy they may mean but Presbytery; by the Bishop may be understood a kind of a Prolocutor. Every assuming Presbyter may at any time say as one of them lately did, that he is as good a Scripture Bishop, as he who sate upon the Bench; or perhaps look upon a Bishop only as a Civil Officer in order to some legal purposes: and by a Liturgy they may mean only such a Form of Prayers which may be either used or let alone, or rather a thing which is (if ever to be) permitted only to those who are Persons of such small sufficiency as not to be able to pray without it, and so instead of being a Duty is intended meerly as a disparagement: or it may be the Common Prayer may be allowed as a way of spending the time till the Company is got together,

gether, and then comes the Prayer which the Spirit is the immediate Author of, and which alone hath the promise of any blessing made unto it.

Unless, I say, that these Persons be required to express their Minds very particularly in these and all other Matters of Debate between us, we shall be always at a loss, how much of the Good Old Cause they resolve to stick to; and without some satisfaction in these things we have reason to be jealous, that they have, after so many other disappointments, pitched upon this Contrivance, as a very likely one, whereby the Church may, by their admission, become divided against it self: The Pulpits may quickly be brought to speak in very different Languages, and the Hearers strangely distracted between the several abettors of the very distant Measures of the Old and the New Conformity.

The Inconveniencies that attend Liberty of Conscience.

THEY who have kept out of the Church thus long, rather than they would not have their Wills in such and such Matters in debate between us; it is scarce to be hoped, that when they are brought into the Church, by being yielded to in them, that they will not with the same Art and Industry keep up in the Minds of Men a good opinion of that Cause which they have so long contended for: At the least

east they will take what care they can, that those of their former Hearers whom they shall be able to bring along with them, (if they shall be able to bring any store of their Hearers along with them, which is no small question) shall for ever be kept under Bondage to every one of all those scruples, by which they have been able to retain Dominion over them: And they who have all along been, observably upon all occasions, admirably expert at interpreting all things to the utmost possibilities of all advantage, as to themselves and their Cause, it is not to be expected from them, that they will not interpret this Condescension as a compleat Justification. And unless the Modesty and Gratitude of these men be strangely increased of late, beyond what it hath used to be, our Governours are not like to receive any other return than this; That God hath at length begun to return again, and in some sort to own his People and his Cause: He hath now opened the Eyes of the Parliament, and let them see their Error in imposing the Renouncing the Covenant: and who knows what more a gracious God may do for so gracious a People? And that Reputation which hath thus long engaged them to pretend their Cause of Separation to be just, can do no less than continue to engage them to avow its having been necessary. So that the Church will by this means be weakned by having one great Security taken from her; those Men will be admitted into her, of whose affections and Designs she hath abundant cause to be highly jealous; and

and who, by obtaining their present Demands, will, according to their old Customs, be thereby emboldned with the like restless importunity to make more demands, and perhaps in a little time be enabled to take what farther they please, without so much as asking it: And by this means the People will become extremely divided, both amongst themselves and from the Government. And when that is done, there will be so many left out of this Comprehension, that the noise will not be much less than it is already: And whatever accession can be supposed to be made to the Church by the coming in of her new Friends, will be more than over-ballanced by the loss she will receive in the stability of her Principles and the Unity of her Children: She will be the less able to defend her self against the Exceptions of the *Romanists*, and be at no small loss for an answer to the Clamours of other Sectaries, who can pretend as great grievances, and alledge as plausible Reasons why they should be gratified; so that the Work of Coalition (as it is called in the newest word) as often soever as it is done, will be just as often to begin again.

How much Toleration is better than Comprehension.

AS to any other Particulars of that Comprehension which is now so much endeavoured, seeing they have not thought fit to let us know them, I shall not venture to make a guess at them, but shall go on to another Contrivance, and in the Opinion of many a more promising one, and that is, Toleration, which is frequently said to be an Expedient which will gratifie many more, and more Considerable Persons than can be hoped to be brought within the Compass of any one Comprehension.

Now it is by no means a thing to be wondered at, if so be that the Proposal of Toleration be in it self at the first view very plausible, and in the eyes of very many Persons exceeding acceptable: It looks like a Priviledge which every man hath an Interest in, which, seeing it is enjoyed by all alike, no man should take himself to have any cause to envy it to any other. Now this Liberty of Conscience, however it hath obtained to be the general Darling, yet, methinks, in the very name there is something which offers it self to our Consideration, which is at least worth our Enquiry; Whether the very demand doth not carry in it an Exception against it self? How doth it appear that Conscience hath any such absolute Right to Liberty? Hath it

it no Rule which it ought to walk by? Hath it no Obligation to follow any besides its own Light? If this be not the Case, then Liberty and Conscience are two words, which are very unfit in great variety of Cases to be joyned together. I shall readily grant, that to act against our Conscience is always a sin; but then I shall add this further, That it is very frequently a grievous sin to act according to it: Conscience may in some cases condemn, but there are very many cases wherein it cannot justify. *I know nothing by my self* (saith St. Paul) *yet am I not hereby justified*; and farther, *I my self thought verily that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus, &c.* The Scripture tells us of *seared Consciences, Reprobate Minds, Men whose minds and Consciences are defiled.* From all which Expressions, it is very clear, That Conscience is not a safe Rule for any man to act by in his private Capacity.

Conscience absolutely taken, no safe Rule either of Actions or Tenets.

AND in the next place, as Conscience is very far from being a safe Rule for any man to Act by in his private Capacity; so it is by no means adviseable, that men should be so far trusted, as to teach according to it in any Publick Places: St. Paul assures us, that by this permission dangerous Contentions shall arise, by reason of the perverseness of men, when in

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the nature of the things there was no real Cause for them, *2 Tim. 2. 14. They will strive about words to no purpose, to the Subversion of the Hearers:* And, *1 Tim. 4. 1.* he tells us of *seducing Spirits, who teach the Doctrines of Devils:* *2 Tim. 3.* for many Verses together, he describes a sort of very wicked men, of whom in the close he gives this Character, *That they have a form of Godliness, but deny the power thereof; that they creep into Houses and lead Captive silly Women laden with divers Lusts:* And again we read of those who *bring in Damnable Heresies;* and again, which directly cometh up to the point in hand about Toleration, *whose mouths must be stopped.* Thus far therefore our way is clear; 1. That according to the Doctrine of the New Testament, Conscience is not its own Rule, is not entirely left to it self in its own way of acting: 2. That those who are allowed to be publick Preachers are not to be intrusted with an absolute Liberty of propagating whatever Opinions themselves either really are, or shall pretend to be of; of which I have already spoke, and therefore shall add no more upon that point besides the laying down some of the many Inconveniencies which will unavoidably arise upon the granting of any such Liberty in these Two Respects, 1. Of Religion, 2. Of Government.

*Of the Mischiefs Liberty of Conscience is
like to bring to Religion.*

FIRST, as to Religion; and here the Case is
 veay clear, that such a Liberty is the most
 ready way in the World to make Religion weak
 and despicable, by being crumbled into an un-
 accountable and every day encreasing variety of
 Sects and Schisms: What one other Contrivance
 can possibly be thought upon, whereby to ex-
 pose Religion to the frequent and seemingly
 just scorn of Unbelievers than this? That it
 should by publick Authority be openly exposed
 to all manner of ridiculous and incongruous pre-
 tences unto it, to all kinds of dotage and im-
 posture, to all the folly and all the falseness
 which is to be met with amongst the Sons of
 men: That every one who hath but a Freak in
 his Brain shall have free Liberty, if he pleaseth,
 to Christen it a motion of the Spirit, and every
 humour though never so unheard of and extra-
 vagant, shall have by Law a Priviledge (if it
 will but claim it) to recommend its self as a
 degree of further Light: Here we shall see men
 shaking all day, as if the Spirit came to them in
 Convulsions, and as the humour increaseth we
 shall see them run naked about the Streets, as if
 with the Old Man, they had put off all degrees
 of Modesty: The Scripture shall be frequently so
 interpreted, as that no man in his Wits can pos-
 sibly understand it, it both hath and may be
 Allegorized

Allegorized so far as to leave no manner of Sence or Truth in any one Word of all the History of it; its Laws may be so commented upon, as to carry in them no manner of Obligation: Amongst our selves the Family of Love had gotten a Fancy that Christ was not any one Person, but a quality whereof many are partakers, that to be raised is nothing else, but to be regenerated or endued with the said Quality, and the separation from them which have it, and them which have it not, is Judgment: Now where ever this Liberty is Indulged, the Grand and concerning Articles of our Faith, our Saviours taking Humane Nature upon him, the Resurrection from the Dead, and the last Judgment, are all given away in Exchange for two or three fanciful Expressions: The History of the Creation hath of old been made but an Allegory; the Garden of *Eden* a fine Trope; it is to little purpose to alledge that with equal Reason it might be said, that by the whole Race of Mankind was not to be understood any real Beings, but only so many handsome Figures, and by the Universe is not to be understood a Creation, but a Strain of Wit, for Reason in such like Cases will be no more harkned to, than Scripture: So likewise it hath been taught, that Christ shall descend from Heaven in a Metaphor, and we be caught up into the Air in a Moral way; The New Heavens and the New Earth are nothing else but the World changed by their Example into their Opinions: And if this Liberty be allowed, all Miracles and all Mysteries will be quickly changed into so

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many Whimsies; for what is it which self-conceit cannot inspire, or madness prove, or that man admit, who cares not to know what himself means? or whether he doth or not, if he be once got under the plausible shelter of Liberty of Conscience himself, what is it that he may not impose upon vast multitudes, who though never so well meaning in themselves, are yet liable to be over-reached by the Arts of other men? The dangers of this kind are not possible to be reckoned, because they encrease and vary at their own pleasure; neither is there any man living, who can possibly tell us how many and how gross absurdities such a liberty as this may bring into the Nation in the very next moment.

This very Devise of Liberty of Conscience, which many, who look upon themselves as wise men and no ill Christians, are fond of, is the very same, by which one of its shrewdest Adversaries did hope to drive Christianity out of the World, and that too by its own assistance; and to that end he granted a promiscuous Liberty for all dissenting Christians to enjoy the publick Exercise of their several wayes, in hopes thereby to engage one of them against another, and by that means to make his advantage upon all of them: For so we read of *Julian*, that when his long contrived project of restoring Heathenism began to be put in effectual Execution, that this was the Course which he pitched upon, as that which was most likely to bring his Design about, to grant Liberty of Conscience to all dissenting Christians, as *Ammianus Marcellinus* hath it

Lib. 22. Vigæ dispositorum roboraret effectum, dissidentes Christianorum Antistites cum plebe discissâ in palatium intromissos monebat, ut civilibus Discordiis consopitis quisque nullo vetante Religioni suæ serviret intrepidus: Here was a man very tender of Consciences, but what think we was his Reason for all this Indulgence and Moderation; we may read it in the next Words, *Quod agebat ideo obstinatè, ut dissensiones augente Licentiâ non timeret; unanimentem postea plebem nullas infestas hominibus bestias ut sunt sibi ferales plerique Christianorum expertus.* This wise and subtle Adversary knew very well that this was a ready way to destroy Christianity, to give a free Liberty and a full opportunity for every one who pleased to divide it: So that this sage Contrivance of ours is but the Christianity of an Heathen, the taking up the *Moderate Counsels* of a profest Apostate; and our Wisdom in preserving Religion doth express it self in those very wayes, by which as wise men as our selves have thought the ready way to overthrow it: Indeed it is hardly credible, that any Person who understands Humane Nature, who considers how many are its weaknesses, and how violent its Passions, who is a Judge of Consequences, or hath at all observed the course of Affairs, can in the least be fond of any such device as this kind of Liberty, who hath not within himself a very great Design against the present Religion of that Kingdom where he doth propose it. But Alas! that is but a small part of this evil, even our common Christianity will be hard put to it, if it must

wrestle with all the difficulties which Toleration will immediately bring upon it: That Faith is in no great likelihood of remaining long pure and sound, which is exposed to whosoever pleaseth to corrupt and to defile it.

Of New Light.

THERE is one Principle well known amongst us, which where-ever it is admitted, there is no Doctrine of Faith whatever, nor Rule of good Life which can be able to stand before it, and that is the Doctrine of New Light or private Illumination: This is an Evil which cannot be watched with too much Care, because it always hath it in its own Power to occasion how many and what kinds of mischief soever it self pleaseth; and withall it is with great ease pretended to by every one who will; and there are every day to be met with too many Persons too readily disposed to be imposed upon by such pretences. Some Romanists have with great scorn insulted over the Reformation, upon the account that this evil hath made a shift to creep into it; whereas this is a difficulty which all Religions are liable to be abused by; a folly with which the Church of *Rome* doth exceedingly abound, and to which she is indebted for some of her chief Orders, as being plainly founded in it. The Quakers in *England* are neither more ridiculous, nor as yet so impious as the *Alumbrosos* were in *Spain*, nor do the Blasphemous Phrenses

Phrenzies of *David George* exceed those of *Evangelium Æternum*. This is an ill Weed which will grow in all Soils, and spread exceedingly; and Infallibility it self is but an equal Plea, and therefore is, upon such occasions, glad to call in to its assistance its Temporal Advantages. This very Pretence doth scarce leave a man within the possibility of being confuted; what Authority is there to be produced which is fit to come in competition with this Perswasion, That I have an immediate suggestion from the Holy Ghost: The Scripture it self hath but one and the same Original, and is of an Elder Date, and, if I please, is as imperfect in respect of my Revelation, as that of *Moses* was in respect of that of *Christ*. This Evil is liable to be as endless as Thought or Art can make it, as boundless as Imagination, and hath as great variety of shapes to appear in, as there are possibilities in the World for any man to be either willing to deceive or liable to be deceived.

What a fatal Influence the now contended for Liberty of Conscience had upon the most considerable Articles of Religion, within a small compass of time, we may learn from the fore-mentioned Testimony of the *London*, and the Attestation of the *Cheshire* Ministers. I shall set down some of the Articles against which those Errors were, but will not deñle my Paper with the Errors themselves. Against the *Divine Authority of Holy Scriptures*; against the *Nature and Essence*; against the *Being of any God*; against *Christ as Mediator*; against the *Obligation of the*

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Moral Law; against *Ordinances*; against *Lawful Oaths*, against *the future State of Mens Souls after this Life*, denying the *Immortality of them*. But besides Religion, such a Liberty will be quickly found to have a sad Influence upon Government and the publick Peace.

Of the Mischiefs which Liberty of Conscience is like to bring to Government.

AND as this sort of Liberty will expose Truth to perpetual and unavoidable Dangers, and withall hath left it no possibility of a sufficient Defence against them; so it hath a natural tendency towards destroying the publick Peace: And not only so, but to the disturbance of all Societies, and even of every private Family. Opinions have a great Influence upon Actions, and engage men not only upon good, but upon very bad practices. He who is allowed to raise a Sect, hath a very fair opportunity put into his hands of making himself the Head of it, as being such a Party; and by being permitted to have their Consciences, will have but too many opportunities of having their Persons and Purfes at his disposal likewise. Hence it is, that though some Princes have been sometimes forced to suffer Dissenters from the established Profession (by reason that they were so numerous, or so subtil, that they could not go about to suppress them without discovering how unable they were to do so;) yet they always looked
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upon such Dissenters as the next door to Enemies; and accordingly had a perpetual Eye and Guard upon them, as those who of all other were the most likely to be the Authors or occasion of the next disturbance. It is a great mistake, though it be often found amongst the greatest Persons, That Sects are things fit only to be despised, because that men of Parts and Fortune are neither easily nor usually seduced by them: but it ought likewise to be considered, that Ambition, Revenge, Covetousness, Humour and Discontent may engage those who are not in earnest themselves seduced, to appear in all seeming earnest to seduce others. I shall readily grant, that both the Beginning and the greatest Growth of Sects are amongst the meanest people, those whose Fortunes are as low as their Understandings; but then they do not stay altogether among them, but spread farther; like a Pestilence, which may begin in an obscure Alley, but in a little time no part of the City or Kingdom may be free from it. Besides, are not the Vulgar People the Hands, the Tools, the Instruments which the greatest must always make use of? And is it not known by frequent experience, that a Deception once got among them, may by a little Connivance thrive so far, as to be able to dispute for Superiority, and instead of demanding an Indulgence, refuse to give one? And, by how much the Ordinary sorts of People are less Masters of Reason than others, with so much the greater ease they may be wrought upon to engage in those Courses; which by men who

understood better, would be looked upon as evidently unreasonable. Now this is an Error which hath been frequently committed by wise men in great places : They look upon the Errors and Follies which the common People are drawn into, as things very fit to be indulged, as being only so many occasions for themselves to Droll upon ; but by their so doing they have often found the return, which *Abner* did of sporting himself with Lives, as these mighty Sages do with Lives and Souls, 2 *Sam.* 2. 14. *Let the Young men arise and play before us ;* but with him they are at last convinced, that *Ver.* 26. it is *bitterness in the latter end.*

The safety of all Government doth depend upon this, that it is certainly stronger than each single Person, and in taking care of this, That as to any kinds of Union or joyning Forces together, that there may be no such things but under the guidance of the Magistrate, and by his appointment ; and so long as this is taken effectual care of, though the discontented persons be never so many, yet because they have no way of uniting ; they are but so many single Persons, scattered, weak and insignificant, having no opportunities of any Common Council, they can never joyn in any Common Design. But let them once have but so much as *any one Phrase* to know one another by, *any settled place* for their constant Meetings, and *a set and known company* for them to meet with, and *any Bond whatever* which doth unite them, and they presently become a distinct People, and begin to be dangerous,

ous, as having an Interest, Counsels and Body of their own, which the Government is not manager of, nor Privy to, but shall quickly find it self highly concerned by all means to provide against.

By what means this Liberty is dangerous to Government,

LET it once be permitted to Crafty, active, talking, lying and designing men, to insil into the minds of all sorts of People, the necessity, usefulness, Piety, or rare excellency of any one thing or Contrivance whatsoever, beyond that which the present Laws and establishment doth provide for ; and is not here a most readily prepared matter for any bold *Boutefue* to work upon, who will take upon him to help the Nation immediately to so fine a thing? Hath not any such Undertaker a vast and already formed Party in all parts of the Kingdom? Let him but represent to them, that the present Government is the only rub in their way, between them and their so fancied happiness ; and is it not very likely that this will be the very next Consequent Resolution ; let us remove that Obstacle, so publick a good is much to be preferred before any particular Form or Family ; the welfare of the Nation is the great End, and Governours themselves were created but in order to that, and consequently are to cease as often as that End can be better attained without them.

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Though the pretence be nothing but Conscience, yet every discontent will joyn to make the Cry both loud and general. Schisms do of themselves naturally grow into Parties, and, besides, are most plausible Occasions for any else to joyn unto them; the gathered Churches are most excellent Materials to raise new Troops out of, and when they are thus far prepared, they are easily perswaded to be at the Service of any one who will attempt to lead them on,

The private Consciences of Men are not ordinarily trusted in their common dealings.

IF all men were wise and honest, if every one understood well, and would act accordingly, upon that Supposition Conscience might have a much greater trust reposed in it than can be now adviseable: And if we could flatter our selves so far as to take that to be the Case, this would no more supersede the necessity of the coercive power of Laws in Religious matters, than it would upon the same grounds supersede it in Civil ones. For no Laws which ever were or can be in the World can possibly provide in any Degree for those large measures of Justice, Equity, Mercy, and all kinds of fair dealing, which would Infallibly every where be met with, if all men did take care to keep a good Conscience. Truth, Justice, Temperance, &c. are things which

which every Man's Conscience doth and must needs tell him that he is obliged to, yet were it not for fear of the Law, we should find that Conscience is not alone to be trusted in these which are her Natural and Familiar Objects: And this is a thing so known and granted on all hands, that it is not usual with men in their dealings among one another to trust purely, in matters of any moment, to one another's Conscience. And seeing we acknowledge that Conscience may so often prevaricate in these plain and obvious things, where she is so easily found out; we have no great cause to trust to her fidelity, that she will not also dissemble in those things which are more remote and obscure, and hidden from the very best of our Discovery. Let those therefore, who plead for Liberty of Conscience, consider; that there are two sorts of men which ought to be provided against, to keep this contrivance of theirs from being absolutely the most senceless and dangerous in the whole World; and upon their Grounds it doth not appear to be so much as possible to provide against them: First, those who are not honest, and these may pretend Conscience if they will, and in that Case Religion and Government, Truth and Peace are like to be most admirably secured, when they are authoritatively permitted to the arbitrary Management of every designing Atheist, who will but take upon him to be an Enthusiast: And in the Second place, as all men are not honest, so all men are not wise, and as the former sort may pretend Conscience, so
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the latter are perpetually liable to be imposed upon by the innumerable, however absurd preferences unto it; Those Laws are not fitted for the Temper of this World, which are made upon this supposition, that every one who looks demurely is presently in good earnest, that men say nothing but what they think; let us but consider that it is very possible for men to personate, and then we shall not be very eager to desire a general License for every one who hath a mind to become a publick Cheat.

And then from these diversities of Judgments, and many times when they are only different forms of speaking, there will immediately arise great Distances of Affection: *For these Divisions, of Reuben there will be great thoughts of heart, surmizings, censures, jealousies, raylings, evil speaking, animosities, peevishness, malice, perverse disputings, and every evil way:* Each Congregation will have at least some one little Proposition peculiar to its self, which all its Profelytes must be known by, which all their Thoughts must be perpetually running upon, and every one else must be called upon to come up to: the smallest gathered Church cannot hold its Members together, unless it hath some particular thing to engage them upon, and to have them known by, for they cannot with any face separate from all mankind, but they must have something to say for it.

This contrivance however it be absurd and dangerous will notwithstanding that, have alwayes many who will be very fond of it; for it

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is a most ready way for every forward Fellow to think himself some Body, because he hath adopted himself into such a Sect; and then the next thing which he is to think upon is to try if he can improve the Notion a little farther; for if so, he shall be the more taken notice of: And if he finds that his addition is but a little taking, he will then forsake his Masters, to set up for himself, divide from that Church of which he hath been long a precious Member to gather a purer of his own. And so his New Light will serve most bravely for himself to shine in.

But if this had been a new and unheard of invention, the Contrivers might then have been allowed to entertain vast hopes of it; but alas, it hath been often tryed, and hath alwayes brought Confusion along with it: And is it to be wondred at, that in variety of Worships the one doth look upon the other as erroneous, and perhaps impious? And then how lamentably must that City be divided whose Inhabitants think themselves bound, as they love God to hate one another; and it hath been often seen, that a Common Enemy hath crept in at these intestine Divisions, and destroyed both, while the one, by reason of different Communions, did not enough care to help the other.

Be our apprehensions about Divine Matters never so different, I grant that we ought not for the sake of them to be wanting in the Common Duties of Humanity to one another, or in our mutual Endeavours after the publick Good. I readily grant, that to be wanting in our assistance

stance in either of these Cases, is a great error; but alas ! it is too general an one, and Law-makers are to consider not only what men ought, but what they use to do. Why shall I fight (saith one) for a Prince who is an Idolater? and why should I (saith another) take any care to relieve that City which is only a Bundle of Schismatics, the greatest part whereof are in my esteem Blasphemers likewise? *Jeroboam* understood this very well, he did not cast off the true God, but only set up another way of Worship, as easily concluding that by perswading them to be of another Religion, he should easily keep them to be another Kingdom; when their Faiths were once divided, the Nations would never care to unite again.

And pray, tell me, what shall a Prince do in that Case, where are diverse ways of Worship allowed and frequented in the same Nation? Shall he discountenance the Professors of any one, by keeping them out of all Office and Employment? If so, he disobligeth that whole Profession, loseth so many hearts; who sure will think themselves to be very hardly dealt with, in that they are disrespected only out of their zeal for God, and because they follow the best of their Light. And what are they like to think of such a State, which doth refuse to employ them meerly upon this account, because they have tender Consciences, and dare not be present where the Gospel is defiled by a profane mixture of humane Inventions? Or, Secondly, shall the Prince carry himself equally and indifferently

ferently towards all Perswasions, countenance and prefer them all alike? This can hardly be, because that he himself must be of some one, and that will think it self not fairly dealt with, if it have not some preeminence : And when he endeavours to shew himself indifferent to all Perswasions, there will enough be immediately ready to give it out, that he makes use of all Religions for his own ends, but himself is really of none ; and so perhaps none of them will be really for him : And thus by endeavouring to displease neither Party, he shall certainly displease them both, at least the Zealots of all sides will represent him at the best as one lukewarm, and as such, only fit to be spit out of all their Mouths.

Men may talk of their fine projects as long as they please ; but surely where the Church is already so settled, as that it hath a great dependence upon the Government, and the Government hath a standing Influence upon that, those Politicks must needs be very strange, which go about to alter or unsettle or put any check upon such a Constitution : And in opposition to a Clergy thus regulated, it is no kindness sure to the Monarchy , to go about to set up such a Ministry as depends purely upon the People : And when the whole Method of the Preachers Maintenance and Reputation must consist in the various Arts by which he can either guide or follow the several Humours of each of his Congregation ; no man can tell what it is possible for a good Crafts-master to perswade the Multitude unto.

But

But this Danger, how great and plain soever it be, yet in the opinion of the great promoters of the desired Ecclesiastical Confusion, is so far from being looked upon as any Inconvenience, that it is in all likelihood the true and real and only Reason which makes them to be so very fond of it, to desire it with so great earnestness, and never to be put off by never so many denials and disappointments. The Church is one great rub in their way between them and the Crown; and therefore because they find that they cannot directly command the present removal of it, they have bethought themselves of two plausible Methods whereby to prepare the way for doing it another time: First, to open the door to let the Churches old Enemies in upon her, and for all the care which shall be taken to give them Liberty, to bring their old Enemies along with them; and by that means the Church will be not only weakened, by being divided within her self, but besides there will be a part of her self always ready to betray her, and give her up. One sort of the Projecters desire only thus much, and that will satisfy them: Another sort there are, who think it not sufficient that the Church be only weakened within, unless there be a free Liberty for whosoever pleaseth to train up as many as he can prevail with to come and learn of them the several ways by which the Church, when occasion offers it self, may be set upon from without: And it is well known, that these Gentlemen are not unacquainted with new Models of Civil as well as Ecclesiastical Administration.

What

*What ends they propose to themselves, tha
promote Liberty of Conscience.*

ANd having thus pointed at some few of the innumerable Inconveniences of Toleration, I shall add once more, that some care ought to be taken of the present Device of Comprehension ; that if it be thought fit to be granted, it may be upon this Condition, That all who receive benefit by it, shou'd be obliged publicly before their Congregations to declare their Approbation of the Liturgy, in a Form to be appointed by Authority for that purpose, and to renew that Declaration on certain Days to be likewise appointed, and to read the Common-Prayer themselves, and not to leave it always to mean Persons, who shall only be appointed to slubber it over, to spend the time till the Company is got together ; and then one of the Precious Men shall come and put himself in all the most solemn Postures imaginable, and in fact say to the People (as Dr. Heylin's Chamber-fellow was served after a short Grace) *Dearly Beloved, let us praise God better* : And withal, that Security should be taken, That this Conformity of theirs be not used meerly as an Expedient to keep them in publick Employment: that so they may be the more ready, when opportunity offers it self, to assist Providence in carrying on the great Work of a thorough Reformation. And this Advice is by no means to be despised, as a
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thing perfectly needless, because that as great a Conformity as for ought appears is now intended, hath been formerly advised and submitted to upon this very account, to prepare Matters the better for an intended Change. This Mr. Calamy (in his Apology against Mr. Burton, 1646. quoted in the Collection called *Evangelium Armatum*, p. 47.) alledgeth for himself to have been one of his own old Arts: *As for the Service-book, let Mr. Burton know, that at a meeting at my House, it was resolved by above a hundred Ministers, after a long debate, upon divers weighty Considerations, That all that could in their Judgments submit to the reading of some part of it, should be entreated for a while to continue so to do. To this our dissenting Brethren then present did agree, and one of them made a Speech to manifest his Concordance. This is enough to give any man satisfaction for the late laying it down.* And proportionably to this, it is a thing well known, that some very well affected to the Good Old Cause, do for all that conform to the use of the Ceremonies of the Church, under the sanctified Excuse of *submitting to them as Burthens*. Now these, I think, are competent fore-warnings to Authority to take care to secure it self against any ill use which is possible to be made of any abatements towards that sort of People, who in this very Case do profess themselves to act without sincerity, and to make use of all the Arts which they can think of.

Their

Their unwillingness to renounce the Covenant, shews how little they repent of it.

AND in the next place their great earnestness in desiring to be dispensed with for renouncing the Covenant, doth in them plainly shew a very great fondness remaining toward it, and if yielded to, would in Authority appear more than a tacit Confession, that it had hitherto been to blame in its Zeal against it. Their restlessness in this is not to be wondred at, because they are sworn *never to be wrought over to an Indifferency or detestable Neutrality*: But that Authority should be wrought over to shew kindness to such a Combination against it self, or that any should propose it to the old Cavaliers to give leave to their old Persecutors to believe themselves under the Oath of God, *to bring every one of them to condign punishment*, is a thing which may justly raise all mens wonder.

I confess indeed, that by the last Bill of Comprehension it was provided (and so perhaps it may in this) That no man should dare to say, that the Covenant doth oblige under such a Penalty, &c. But it is much to be doubted that such a Provision may not be sufficient; for let us consider this one thing: Those Persons, concerning whom our present Debate is, are such as are to be entrusted to be Guides of Consciences, and if this Renunciation be once taken off, then they have Liberty enough to insist upon the

Obligation of the Covenant amongst their Confidants, without coming within the danger of the Law. Let us remember that the Holy League in *France* was taken by above half the Kingdom, before the King did ever so much as hear of it.

But, to make this Matter plain, I shall propose a Case very like it in our own Kingdom. Suppose that any man out of the great Tenderness which he pretends to have for the Consciences of Men, should propose that the Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy should be by Act of Parliament taken away, upon this very pretence, That Oaths are not to be multiplied but upon great necessity; that the Consciences of Men are nice and tender things, and ought not to be disquieted by being pried into; and disputable Points of Government are not fit matters to be put into an Oath: Ought not such a Person to be looked upon with a very jealous Eye, as being ill affected to his Majesties Person, his Crown and Dignity? He himself and all his Favourers will, no doubt, reply, no; because he doth at the same time offer a Security in it self as Good and more fit to be taken, and that is this, That it shall be very punishable for any man to say, *That our Sovereign Lord King Charles is not lawful and rightful King of these Realms, &c. and that the Pope hath any Power or Authority to depose the King, &c.* He, I say, who should propose this Alteration, ought in all reason to be looked upon as a better Subject to the Pope than to the King. And so likewise, and for the same Reason,

son, those, who with so great Eagerness and Importunity have so often endeavoured the taking away the Renunciation of the Covenant, ought to be very much suspected, lest they have in their Eye something which is of much higher Consideration with them, than either the Settlement of the Church, or the safety of his Majesty.

*Objections answered, taken from their
I. Number.*

IT now remains, that I consider the great Objections which are urged against all which is already said, which are these, That Comprehension, say some, others, Toleration, others both, are fit to be granted; 1. By reason of the great Numbers who do desire it: Secondly, in respect of their great Merit, they being Persons in whom doth consist a great part of the Sobriety, Industry, Frugality and Wisdom of the Nation, and particularly the Presbyterians have deserved well of His Majesty. Thirdly, it is very adviseable to grant a Liberty at this time to these Persons by reason of the great assistance which they are able to afford us against Popery; and Fourthly, that if a Liberty be not given, it will be a very great Inconvenience to Trade. Fifthly, Toleration of several Forms of Religion, is a thing which we may see a good effect of among our Neighbours in *France* and *Holland*: Lastly, Civil Penalties are of no use in Religion, but only to make Hypocrites. To all which pretences I return this.

First, that the Numbers of these Men are not in any degree so great as they do pretend; It is indeed one of their great and old Arts to make all the shew they can possibly, and to boast of those Numbers which they cannot shew; one who is as well acquainted with the Muster-Rolls of these Parties as any man, doth plead for an Indulgence by this very Argument, that they are not so considerable as that any danger needed to be feared from them. *Peace-Offering*, p. 8. *What are we that Publick Disturbance should be feared from us, nec pondera rerum, nec momenta sumus; by what way or means, were we never so desirous, could we contribute any thing thereunto? What designs are we capable of? &c.* So that it seems this is an Argument which they can either use or lay aside, as occasion offers it self: They can either wheedle Authority into pity and forbearance upon the account that they are so inconsiderable, as that no danger can possibly be feared from them; Or otherwise they can Hectour Authority, as being so considerable, as that there is no danger so great, but if they are disoblighd, it may reasonably be feared from them.

In the second Place, is it any wonder that these men do appear in some Numbers, considering how easily many honest well-meaning Persons may be seduced by the Zeal and vehemence of some who are seduced themselves, and the various Arts of others whose great design is to seduce as many as they can possibly: And again, are there not some Remainders of the
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Old Army yet alive, Committee-men, Sequestrators, Purchasers of Crown and Church-Lands, and otherwise interested in the late Rebellion? besides vast Multitudes of the Common People depending on them, who must needs be glad of so many Solemn Occasions of meeting one another, by which they keep up their Acquaintance and Correspondence, and put a very serious face upon their *good old Cause*, and find many opportunities to be mutually serviceable to one another in their private Affairs, and of joyning Counsels against the Publick. And do they not breed up their Children and Relations in the very same Principles with themselves? Now the greater Numbers there are of such People, so much the greater care there ought to be taken that they be not permitted to meet together. The Meeting-place is very well fitted for a Religious Rendevouz, and the Spiritual Master of the Camp may not only deliver out his Orders at the same time with, but may stamp upon them the Authority of the Oracles of God.

But in the next Place, if the Government would please but to own it self, the Numbers of these men would presently appear to be very inconsiderable; and this hath no oftner been tryed than it hath been found to have been accompanied with good effect. In *Queen Elizabeths* Days, these mens Predecessors were very troublesome, made great noise with their great Numbers, and the great dangers which would arise by disobliging them; and they had some

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great Favourers in Court upon some accounts, which were not very Religious ; but when by reason of their Insolent Provocation in the Year 1588. When the Queen was in all her Fears from the *Spanish Armado*, and in a condition, as they thought, to deny them Nothing ; they so far provoked her, as to alienate Her Mind for ever from them : Their boasted-of Numbers did immediately abate, and the Laws were immediately submitted to, as soon as ever they did perceive that it was but in vain to think of longer trifling with them : So likewise it happened in King *James* His Days, their loud Clamours were presently silenced, as soon as ever the King declared Himself resolute at the Conference at *Hampton-Court* : Nor would the Act of Uniformity have had any less effect, if it had not been accompanied with a general Discourse at the same time of a Toleration to follow immediately upon it. And I appeal to the Consciences of several of the Preachers in the Separated Congregations, whether they did not leave their Livings upon this very hope, which without it they would never have done ?

Besides, the Numbers of the Dissenters ought by no means to be looked upon, as an Argument for Toleration by any, because, it is not looked upon as such by themselves : This very Point being a thing about which themselves are highly divided, and would by no means if they could help it, grant to one another.

2. *Merit.*

BUt besides their Numbers, they are now to be considered in point of Merit ; but this is a part of the Argument in which I do delight so very little, as that I must gratifie my own temper so far, as to say very little in it. The Faults of other men are things which I by no means delight to dwell upon, even when it is necessary, I take it to be very irksome : As they are particular Persons, I have nothing to say to any one of them, and whatever Degrees any of them have attained to in Piety and Virtue, in any kind of Intellectual , Moral , and Religious Accomplishments, I pray God that they may every day increase more and more in them, and that both here and hereafter they may receive the comfort and reward of whatever is truly good in them. But as they are a Party, I take it to be very clear, that their Merit hath not been very great, either to the Crown or Nation, and in this it were easie to be very large, for one who delights in that which to me is a very ungrateful Employment. In the Histories of *Queen Elizabeth*, *King James*, *King Charles* the First ; there is too much to be found on this Argument, and His Majesty which now is, when He was in the Hands of these men, what Usage He did receive from them, though His Royal Clemency hath been graciously pleased to pardon, yet His Loyal Subjects have not quite forgot it.

3. *Assi-*

3. *Assistance against Popery.*

AS to the next Pretence, that it is adviseable to grant these men an Indulgence at this time, by reason of the great assistance which they are able to afford us against Popery: This is such an Objection which the Regular Sons of the Church will scarce be able to refrain themselves from looking upon without some Indignation: The Writings of the Bishops and Episcopal Divines have hitherto been had in great Esteem over all the Reformation; no men thought to have had a better Cause to defend; no men looked upon as better able to defend it: Not to mention the many Worthies in Queen *Elizabeth*, and King *James* His Days, whose Names are, both at home and abroad, had in great and deserved Honour: I shall only mention some few, who since the beginning of the present Controversie have wrote against the Puritans as well as Papists, and accordingly have fell under the Indignation of both Parties, viz. Arch-Bishop *Laud*, Arch-Bishop *Bramhal*, Bishop *Taylor*, Doctor *Hammond*, and Mr. *Chillingworth*. How many Ages will the Non-conformists take to breed up a man equal to any one of these? Bishop *Sanderfon*, a Person of known Learning and Judgment, in a Preface to a Body of Sermons, Printed some Years before His Majesties Return, takes occasion to declare his Opinion concerning the Controversie between the Church of *England*, and Church of *Rome*, as it useth

to be handled by the Non-Conformists ; his Words are these : *That they preach against Popery, I not at all mislike, only I could wish that these two Cautions were better observed than (as far as I can conjecture of the Rest by the proportion of what hath come to my Knowledge) I fear they usually are by the more zealous of that Party : First, that they do not through Ignorance, Prejudice, or Precipitancy, call that Popery which is not, and then under that name and notion preach against it ; and then Secondly, that they would do it with less noise and more weight, &c.* Now it is well known, that Bishop Sanderson was a Person of great Learning and Judgment, and withal a Person of very great Humility and Modesty, and who did very little delight in undervaluing the meanest Person living ; and yet he expresth his Thoughts concerning the Writings of the Non-Conformists against the Church of Rome, to be liable to these two not inconsiderable Defects : First, that they did not understand the Question ; Secondly, that they did not know how to pitch upon such Arguments as were fit to be made use of. And withal some Pages afterwards he adds this, *That even in these times of great Distraction, and consequently thereunto of so great advantage for the Factors for Rome, none have stept into the Gap more readily, nor appeared in the face of the Enemy more openly, nor maintained the Fight with more stoutness and gallantry than the Episcopal Divines have done, as their late Learned Writings testifie : yea and some of them such (as beside their other sufferings) have lain as*
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deep under the suspicion of being Popishly affected as any other of their Brethren whatsoever: That by the Endeavours of these Episcopal Divines some that were bred Papists have been gained to our Church, others that began to waver, confirmed and settled in their Old Religion, and some that were fallen from us recovered and reduced, notwithstanding all the disadvantages of these confused Times; and of each of these I am able to produce some Instances. But I profess sincerely, as in the presence of God, and before the World, that I have not known (at least I cannot call to remembrance) so much as one single Example of any of this done by any of our Anti-Ceremonian Brethren, whether Presbyterian or Independent.

Now whether our separating Brethren have been improved in their Abilities, or have been more fortunate in their successes in their disputings with the Romanists since that time, it lies upon them to make out; I am sure that the Writings of the most eminent Persons now among them were then extant: Since which time there hath indeed appeared a Body of Sermons, being the united Labours of sundry of them, but of any Miracles which either have or are likely to be wrought by them, the World both is, and it is to be feared will be for ever silent.

If therefore we take these men into the Church, our Church will be so much the less defensible, as having admitted into it Persons whose Principles are no way justifiable; and withal with express leave not to renounce the
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most unjustifiable of all their Principles. And for their Assistance against the Romanists, it doth not as yet appear, that it will be so valuable as to countervail the Advantage we shall give the Church of *Rome* by taking these into our Church. If we suffer them to remain in Bodies distinct from the Church, then the Romanists have an Advantage, if they please to use it, to take up what disguise themselves shall suppose to be fittest for them. How easie a thing is it for a Priest to set up for a gifted Brother! And what one Opinion is there imaginable, which may not be brought in under the pretence of a farther degree of New Light? Whether all the Stories be true of Friars who have preached in Meeting-houses, I have not had an opportunity of being so well informed, as to venture to say any thing; but I am sure, if they will, they have there fair opportunities offered: And if it be not as yet seasonable to set up directly for their own Church, they may however prepare the way by pulling down of ours.

And notwithstanding all the Zeal which the Non-conformists do declare against Popery, it is well known that they know very well how to joyn both Counsels and Arms together: The leading Men of both Parties in *Ireland* were wonderfully great together, all the while that the Design was managing against my Lord of *Strafford*; and here in *England*, in the Declaration which the King set forth concerning the Success of the Battel at *Edge-hill* on October 23.

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1643. He hath left this Memorial to all Posterity; *All men know the great numbers of Papists which serve in their Armies, Commanders and others; the great Industry they have used to corrupt the Loyalty and Affection of all our loving Subjects of that Religion; the PRIVATE PROMISES and UNDERTAKINGS THAT THEY HAVE MADE TO THEM, that if they would assist them against Us, ALL THE LAWS MADE IN THEIR PREJUDICE SHOULD BE REPEALED, &c.*

4. *Their hindering Trade.*

AS to the next Objection, That the suppressing of Conventicles will be a great hindrance to Trade: I must needs confess, that this is a thing which would have great weight, if it had any truth in it. That Trade is a thing of great and general Concern, is so plain and confessed a thing, as that there is no need of spending many words whereby to prove it: Our wisest Kings have always thought themselves concerned to make Laws and all manner of provisions whereby to promote and encourage it; and there is scarce any man so mean, but that he doth in one degree or other receive some benefit by our Commerce with other Nations. Not to enter into particulars, I shall only name one, which is indeed the Measure of all the rest, and that is Money; which is not a thing of our own Growth, but it is a thing without which those things which are of our own Growth, cannot with-

without great difficulty pass from one hand to another. Our Ships are our Bulwarks, nay, they are more than so; for they not only keep other Nations from coming to us, but they carry us to them: They make the Sea to be our Earth, the whole World to be as it were our native Soil, by bringing home to our doors whatsoever groweth in any Corner of the Universe. It was Trade which brought Tyre to be called *The City of Joy, the crowning City, whose Merchants were Princes, and whose Traffickers the honourable of the Earth*, Esay 22, 7, 8. It was by the benefit of Trade that this City is again said *to have heaped up silver as dust, and fine Gold as mire in the streets*, Zech. 9. 3. It is absolutely necessary for us, if we will be secure of our own Land, to keep up a proportionable strength at Sea. And besides this necessity in point of Safety, it brings innumerable advantages in point of improvement; carrying from us our own Commodities which we can spare from our own use, and in return bringing us whatsoever the World doth afford, for Use, Delight, Strength or Ornament. It is a thing by which vast multitudes do alone subsist and altogether depend upon, which great numbers do thrive and flourish by; by which His Majesty hath a brave Addition to his Revenue, and every man besides doth in his degree find many comforts and conveniencies in his way of Living: It is the great Employer and Rewarder of all sorts of Ingenuity and of Industry; by means whereof we every day see men advanced to Wealth
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and Honour, to live comfortably to themselves, and with great benefit to their Country. It is a thing in it self clear, that Trade is very highly and universally beneficial, and those who are but ordinarily versed in it are able to reckon many admirable Advantages which I cannot so much as think upon. It remains now that I enquire whether there be any such Inconsistency between Trade and Uniformity in Religion, as is generally (though without any Ground which I could ever hear) pretended? These Two things have in their nature no manner of Repugnancy, and if there be any Repugnancy between them, it doth not proceed from them themselves, but from something else, which it is to be hoped may be removed, and neither of these Two things the worse for the removal of it; and what that is I shall now enquire.

It is well known, that this Argument from Trade hath been used in former days, when there was no manner of occasion for it; but however it served as a pretence, whereby to amuse the People, and make them clamour against the Government. I instance in the Case of my Lord of *Strafford*: What a noise was raised all over the Town, that there could be no Trade in the Kingdom till Execution was done upon him? And whosoever raiseth any such Cry shall have always some ready to joyn with him in it, because there will be always those who will want Trade: And let him but tell them that the Court and the Bishops are the only Causes of this their want, and it is

no wonder if they cry out with the loudest, Down with them, down with them to the ground. Indeed if the Bishops in *England* did pretend to the same Power with the Presbyteries in *Scotland*, then indeed it might so happen that the Traders might have some cause to be jealous of them; for those Gentlemen did at the Assembly at *Glasgow*, 1638. pass an Act concerning Salmon-fishing; another about Salt-pans, *Roger L'Estrange*, p. 330. By Act of Assembly at *Dundee* 1592. they prohibited all Trading with any of the King of *Spain's* Dominions, and they put down the *Munday-market* at *Edinburgh*, *Spotswood*, p. 393, 394. But in this Case the Shooe-makers thought fit to assert their Christian Liberty against the Impositions of the Presbytery, and tumultuously gathered together, and threatned to chase the Ministers out of Town; upon which the Market continued: Which, as that grave Historian tells us, did cause much sport at Court, where it was said, *That Rascals and Soutars could obtain at the Ministers hands what the King could not in Matters more reasonable.*

That Trading hath, ever since the Restauration of His Majesty, been very high, notwithstanding the many complaints about it, it is very evident to any man who is never so little acquainted with the Custom-house; but that it hath not answered to the height of all mens hopes, is not to be wondred at, if we consider some things which have hapned, which the Act of Uniformity was no way concerned in: First,

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there

there was a War with *France* and *Holland*, by which it was not to be avoided, but that many Merchants must needs become very great Sufferers: Secondly, At the very same time there was a raging Plague, not only in *London*, but in most of the other Trading places of the Nation; which did not only sweep away great numbers of our Trading People, but may easily be supposed to have had an unhappy influence upon Trade it self: Thirdly, To accompany these two great difficulties there came a dreadful Fire, the loss by which is inestimable: And Fourthly, there hath been a Second *Dutch* War. Now there are none of all these things can happen to a Nation, but Trade must unavoidably suffer by, and feel it; and then the wonder will be very little if we consider that we have suffered by them all. And these are things so publicly known, that it is to be admired, that men should have the confidence to take no notice of any one of them; but if they hear of any Difficulties which the Trading People do wrestle with, presently overlook all these notorious Causes, and enter into long Harangues about Common-Prayer and Ceremonies. I may add that besides the fore-mentioned Calamities; If we are out-done in point of Trade by our Neighbours in *Holland*, it is not to be wondered at, if we consider the Nature of our Country, and the Manners of our People.

Our Country hath in it self a great plenty of all things necessary for the life of men, which *Holland* hath not; they must trade or they cannot

not live, which is not our Case: And if necessity makes men expert, and their being expert brings them to thrive; it is not to be wondred at: It is this very necessity which every day makes vast Numbers among them, glad to submit to all the Labours and Hazards of all the Seas in the World, and all this purely to support their Lives with very coarse fare, and very small wages; now the goodness of our Country affording to our People a more comfortable subsistence upon much easier terms than is to be had among them, is one plain cause why our People are not easily to be brought to take that pains, run into those dangers, and submit to those severe terms, which with them is not less than absolutely necessary: Not to say any thing of the return of their long Voyages, what vast advantages do they make by Fishing upon our own Coasts, which we always complain of, but will by no means betake our selves unto. Again, he who hath got a vast sum of money by trading, hath here in *England* a perpetual conveniency of purchasing Land with it, and by that means he himself or his Son doth become a Country Gentleman, which in *Holland* is not to be done; by which means Trade is amongst us given over, when men come to be Masters of such great sums of Money as to be best able to command it, and to reap the most considerable advantages by it: In *Holland*, because Trade is the thing which every one is to trust to, their Wives and Children are all instructed in the Mysteries, and inured to the business of it, and so

the Stock and Experience of a Family descends from Father to the Son, and increaseth from Generation to Generation: Now it is far from being a Miracle, that their Merchants should be able to out-do ours, who are frequently left by their Parents as large or larger sums of Money to begin with, as ours take themselves to be very well satisfied with and give over: They go on and improve what we look upon as more adviseable barely to enjoy, and by that means prevent an increase which would have come easily, and too often wast and consume what they in a few Years are by reason of their great Stocks inabled without difficulty to treble. And besides that different way of disposure of the plenty of the Rich which is between them and us: They make another and greater advantage of the necessities of the Poor, than we either do or can do, or it is fit for us to do: They make their People to work harder, fare harder than any of ours will do, to take smaller wages, and by that means they are something helped in being able to under-sell us: And besides the Masters of Trade do themselves live much more frugally than we do in point of Diet and Apparel, and other heights of living, and studiously avoid many unnecessary ways of Expence, which we are (perhaps too apt) to be fond of. And whatever is expended must needs take off so much from Improvement; which Consideration prevails with them to be very sparing till they are very Rich, and not to pretend to any of the ways of Vanity, till they have brought themselves

selves into a condition to carry on their material Concerns with the best advantage. Now is it any wonder, if there were nothing more in the Case than this, that in Trade they should much out-do us? And there is little doubt to be made of it, that he who is better acquainted with that People than I am, will be able to reckon many other particular things wherein they differ from us in order to this great Design, which have no manner of relation to Liberty of Conscience, and which would have the same effect without it, as they can possibly have by it.

As to our selves and our present Case, there are but three Things (which I can learn) pretended, by reason of which it is possible to be supposed, that the putting the Act against Conventicles in Execution can draw any prejudice upon Trade : First, that Merchants who are not willing to conform, will not come over and settle in *England*: Secondly, that the most eminent Traders being Non-conformists, they will either forbear Trading to the utter undoing of all such Workmen (as Weavers, &c.) who do depend upon them, or leave the Kingdom, and carry their profitable Trades along with them ; which will bring a great decay of Trade here, and carry away that benefit, which *England* might have received, to that, whatever Country they shall please to settle in.

Thirdly, That Merchants beyond Sea (as *Roman* Catholicks, &c.) will not be easily persuaded to trust their Estates in the hands of those who are not of their own Religion, and

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they who are, being lyable to such Prosecutions as by our Laws they are liable unto, will be fearful of having any Estates in their own hands, and look upon it as more adviseable to forbear Trading, rather than to be liable to so many Difficulties; These are the three most considerable Objections which I have hitherto been able to meet with, and to each of these I have this to offer by way of return.

As to the first, that this severity will discourage Forreign Merchants from coming over to us: It is a mistake to think that the Church of *England* is such a Bug-bear to the rest of the Reformation, as that the Religion of that is looked upon as sufficient Cause to hinder any great Numbers of valuable Persons from coming over to dwell in the Nation. It is by no means clear that any store of them do at this time desire to transplant hither, and if they did, it is more than possible that some other of our Civil Constitutions may be greater bars in their way, than the Act against Conventicles, and particularly the want of a Register: And that Person must have more than ordinary Intelligence, who can be able to secure us, that there are such Numbers of considerable Merchants at this time designing to come over, and are diverted only by the News of the Bill against Conventicles going to be put into Execution; as that the advantage and addition of those Persons, and that Trade to the Nation should be so great, as to overballance those many and unavoidable Inconveniences which I have already shewed,

shewed, that Religion and Government must be exposed to, by the grant of Liberty of Conscience. It doth not remain in our Memories that in *Cromwel's* time, when there was Liberty given to all except Papists and Prelatists, that any were by that Liberty encouraged to come over, at least not any such number as to be considerable. But suppose it should so happen, that some Eminent Merchants should design to come over; I could never yet hear, nor am I wise enough to think upon any reason, why the Act against Conventicles should more fright them from *England*, than the Inquisition doth from other Countries, as *Spain*, *Italy*, and *Portugal*; and yet in those Countries Merchants have their Factories, and drive their greatest Trade: Besides strangers, Merchants have as much encouragement in this particular, as can reasonably be desired; the *French* have their Church, the *Dutch* theirs; nay, even the *Jews* have theirs, and all Aliens of the Reformation have even by the very Act of Uniformity an express provision made for them, as to the enjoyment of their own way of Worship at the pleasure of His Majesty; and if they do meet and keep to their own Language, they need fear no more in this Country than in any other.

As to the second Thing alledged, that if the Act against Conventicles be put in Execution, the most Eminent Traders being Non-Conformists, they will leave off Trading, and by that means undo all sorts of Workmen who do depend upon them, and not only so, but leave

the Nation, and carry their Trades away along with them.

Now that this is a thing of more Noise than Weight, will appear if we examine it with a little Care. That some eminent Merchants are Non-conformists is undoubtedly True ; but that the most eminent are so, I am sure is not true, and could easily make it appear, if it were fit to mention the Names of particular Persons : But so far as it is true, doth any man in his wits imagine ; that the Act against Conventicles will make them either quit their profitable Trades, or fright them out of the Kingdom ? It doth neither condemn them to be hanged nor burned, neither doth it so much as touch their Persons or Estates for being Non-conformists, but permits them to be of what Religion they please, and alloweth them the free exercise of their Religion in their Families : It cannot therefore be easily imagined, that People will be so far out of their wits (though I must confess that Faticism will go a great way toward putting them out of them) as to leave their settled and profitable Trades, their Native Country, Relations and Friends, only because they cannot publicly shew the exercise of their Mode of Worship ; whereas they may freely enjoy it in their own Families, and be known to do so, without the least interruption in any of the fore-mentioned Conveniencies : Especially considering, that Merchants of that Eminency, that their Case deserves to be taken notice of in a case of this publick concern now under debate,

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are very well able to keep Ministers in their own Houses, and may do it with far less charge and prejudice, than either going into some other Country, or the forbearance of their Trades will put them to. But I shall for once suppose two Things, whereof the first is evidently not true; the second not at all likely, That the most Eminent Merchants are Non-conformists, and that upon that account they will forbear Trading: But even upon these Terms it is to be hoped that those they deal with will not be utterly undone, whatever may be pretended: For put the case that three or four of the most Eminent Merchants should dye, or (which I wish did never happen) break; every days experience shews us, that the Clothiers they deal with, and consequently the Weavers, and other Workmen depending upon them, are not presently ruined, or so much as out of employment, but do immediately find other Merchants to deal with; the Trades of those who either give over Trading, or dye, being always continued by their Sons, or Partners, or shared amongst those who have been their Servants, or other Merchants who deal in the same Commodity, and to the same Places. But suppose that the putting the Laws in Execution should so far distract any Numbers, as to make them run out of the Kingdom: Let it be considered whither they will run, only into *Holland*, where they cannot more freely enjoy the exercise of their Religion in their own Families, nor converse more freely with one another about it, than they

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they may do here in *England*. All the difference is, that here they cannot meet in great Numbers, and I leave it even to the Non-Conformists themselves to judge, whether that one Conveniency of Meeting in great Numbers be a sufficient enticement to any rational man to exchange *England* for *Holland*?

But put the Case, that they do go into *Holland*, or into some other Country; I did never yet meet with any man who could demonstrate to me how they could carry away their Trade of Merchandizing, though they were never so willing; live in *Holland* they may, and drive their usual Trades here in *England* by their Correspondents, in which Case the Nation will only lose the common profit of their eating, drinking and wearing: But to carry away the Trade of the Nation with them, is not possible, if they leave any Merchants behind, as I am sure they will many more, and more considerable than any who will go away; and by withdrawing themselves into other Countries, they will but leave their Trades to be shared amongst better Men and better Subjects; so that by leaving the Kingdom, instead of prejudicing, they would occasion a very great blessing unto it, by carrying away with them the Divisions, but not at all the Trade of the Nation.

When the Act against Conventicles was first made, this Argument against it from Trade was much insisted on, and I remember a Story was raised about some great Dealers in the *West*, who had with-drawn their Stock, left off all business,
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by which means vast Numbers of poor People, who did depend on them, were utterly undone: This Matter seemed so considerable, as that several of the most Eminent Persons in the Nation did meet together to consult about a remedy for so great, and as it was said, so growing an evil. But when this Matter came to be enquired into, I could never learn that it had any thing more than a great deal of noise in it.

There is an eminent City in this Nation, inferior perhaps to none except *London*, wherein this Artifice was made use of to fright the Magistrates from suppressing the Conventicles: A great rumour was spread up and down, that if they might not have Liberty to meet as formerly, then they would all withdraw their Stocks, which would be a great detriment to His Majesty, and a vast loss to the City, and leave the Poor to be provided for by their respective Parishes. But the Raisers of all this Clamour did quickly find that they had to do with those who were at least as great Masters of Trade as themselves, and accordingly it was undertaken by those who were very well able to make it good; that if the Dissenters did think fit to withdraw their Stocks, there should immediate care be taken that the Trade of the City should be carried on to the very same height which it was at, without the least abatement, or leaving any one Workman out of as good an Employment as he had before: It was so far from being feared, that it was desired that they would withdraw their Stocks, and that they may be
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the better encouraged to the so doing, provided that they would give Security that they will not Trade at all, neither by themselves, or others for them, nor in other mens Names, they shall at any time have a good sum of Money given them, if that may move them to it.

Let us not be vainly afraid, where no fear is: Do we know the Non-Conformists no better than so, that we should suspect them of being apt to give over their profitable Trades? It had been a more rational Jealousie to have looked upon them as more intent upon any imaginable way of getting of Money, than on any Settlement of Religion, of what sort soever: And perhaps it would be not only no ill Experiment to destroy this Argument, but withal as likely a way to reduce them, as any which can be thought upon; if there were a Law, That those who refuse to conform, or at least who meet at Conventicles, should not be permitted to Trade: Such a Law indeed would be terrible to them, and I hope the bare mention of it will make them forbear to use this kind of threatening us with that, which to themselves alone will be, if at all, dreadful.

5. *France and Holland have good experience of it.*

AS to the third Objection, That Merchants beyond Seas (as *Roman Catholics, &c.*) will be afraid to trust their Estates in the hands of

of those who are not of their own Religion, &c. It is of so little weight as to require but a very few words; it being evident that all kinds of Merchants at this day do correspond, and always have corresponded with others not of their own Religion, Papists with Protestants, Protestants with Papists, &c. What other Pretences there are in this Case, wherein Trade may seem concerned, I do not at present call to mind, and therefore shall go on to the next suggestion why a Toleration of several ways of Religion may not do as well here as it doth amongst our Neighbours in *France* and *Holland*.

As to *France*, the different Professions of Religion there, hath not been without many sad effects upon both Parties, and hath so sanctified the Animosities on each side, that it hath prevailed upon both, out of Zeal to God, to let Aliens and Enemies into the Bowels of their Native Country. But their Case and ours is vastly different; the *Hugonots*, who are there tolerated, have those Merits to plead which our Non-Conformists have not; and besides, they do not divide into several Communions among themselves, neither would any such thing be permitted either by the Government, or by the Reformed Church it self.

As to *Holland*, Liberty of Conscience is a thing which they were not brought to admit of by second Thoughts, and after mature Deliberation, but were necessitated upon by the Nature of that Cause upon which they first united among themselves, and the Constitution of that Govern-

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Government they fell into. One part of their Cause was a Deliverance from the Impositions of the Church of *Rome*, as exercised after the imperious manner of the *Spanish* Government : Now Liberty in matters of Conscience was the most natural Word in the World in this Case to be made use of; Freedom from the present Pressures was the thing immediately in their Eye, and many of their Neighbours at the same time had the same Aim : And as they were then only agreed what they would not have, but not at all what they would have, they invited all, that all might come to their Assistance. But besides this, one Religion was not easie to be brought into so many several Independent Governments, as go to the making up of those States. For as Sir *William Temple* tells us, *Chap. 2. of their Government, p. 75. They are not a Common-wealth, but a Confederacy of seven Sovereign Provinces united together for their common and mutual Defence, without any dependance one upon another, &c. Nay farther, That each of these Provinces is likewise composed of so many little States and Cities, which have several Marks of Sovereignty within themselves, and are not subject to the Sovereignty of the Province; not being concluded in many things by the Majority, but only by the universal Concurrence of Voices in the Provincial States.* To this let us add the great Variety of Persons which by reason of the Wars and Persecutions of those times, came into, and embodied with them, out of *France, Germany, England*; and is it to be wondred at, if not knowing how

to agree in any one way, they permitted divers ?

Such a kind of Liberty therefore as is now contended for amongst us, cannot so properly be said to be given by these States, as to have grown up with them ; and though it be a part of their Nature, is one of their Inconveniencies ; and this hath not been unperceived by them. In the Affair of *Barneveldt* it was found that Religious Differences could find a way of intermingling themselves with State-quarrels, and the States did then think fit to make Laws about what they called erroneous in point of Doctrine, As to Religion the Effects of Liberty of Conscience are in those Countries plainly to be seen in the daily growth of Popery and Socinianism, and of men altogether indifferent, as to all kinds of Articles of Belief ; things which by the same means may be brought into *England*, and indeed upon the admittance of which, are not to be kept out of it. The States of the United Provinces may indeed keep themselves safe from all Disturbances which may arise from Enthusiastick Lunacies, by reason of their Garrisons and standing Army, without which no security can be had against the dangers of Toleration. And seeing that the Case of *England* is in both these Respects very different from that of *Holland*, and it is to be hoped is intended so to continue, an Argument of this nature taken from them ought by no means to be looked upon as what ought to conclude us by it.

Now

Now that the Argument from *Holland* ought by no means to be looked upon as conclusive to us, either as to Comprehension, or as to Toleration, doth appear in these Two things: 1. In the Constitution of our Government, as being very different from theirs; 2. In the Condition of those People amongst us who dissent from the Government. 1. As to the Constitution of our Government, Comprehension is with us much more unsafe than the same thing would be in *Holland*; because the Preachers do there depend altogether upon the States Pay, and have no other Tenure but during pleasure; whereas a Beneficed Man with us hath a Free-hold, and is not to be turned out but by a legal Way: By which advantage he may fence with Authority, and may publickly deliver such things which the people may very well understand, and yet the Law may not be able to take any hold of him. And of this, I doubt, we should have sudden experience, if these men could be admitted by Law into sure and certain Possessions upon their own Terms; and I am the more apt to suspect this, because I could never yet hear that this sort of men was ever wrought upon by being yielded to: And if their Gratitude and good Nature should upon this occasion begin, it will be so much the more welcome as it is less expected.

But as Comprehension among us, considering the Persons who do desire it, and their declared Principles, is much more unsafe than the same thing would be in *Holland*, by reason of the Constitution of our Government in reference to
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the Clergy; So likewise for the same reason is Toleration more unsafe here than it would be there, if we do consider the Temper of those People who dissent from us. *Holland*, as I have already mentioned, hath a standing Army, and so considerable a one, that the Publick Peace shall infallibly be secured by it, whether their Preachers, or whoever else can be perswaded by them, will or no. And how confidently soever the Argument from *Holland* is now adays made use of, to induce us to grant the like Liberty, there was a time when this very Argument was looked upon with great scorn: The Author of *Wholsome Severity, &c.* doth censure the States of the United Provinces with great sharpness upon this occasion, p. 30. and compares the Toleration there given to differing sorts of Dissenters, to the Toleration given by the Pope to *Courtizans*.

And besides, the various sorts of Perswasions there do not use to question the Lawfulness of Tolrating one another, as ours have always done. I have already shewed, that the Presbyterians would by no means tolerate the Independents, if they knew how to help it; and I shall now in a word shew, how unwilling the Independents are to tolerate the Presbyterians, or other Sects which in their Inclinations they do not favour.

And this is no new discovery of mine, but a thing which did discover it self as early as there was occasion for it, as we read in the fore-mentioned Book called *Wholsome Severity reconciled with Christian Liberty*, p. 19. In New England

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there hath been Severity enough (to say no worse)
 used against Hereticks and Schismaticks. And here
 I must appeal to the Consciences of those who now
 plead so much for Liberty of Conscience and Toler-
 ation in this Kingdom ; were they able to root out the
 Presbyterians and their way, and could find Civil Au-
 thority inclinable to put forth the Coercive Power a-
 gainst it, Whether in that case would they not say,
 That the Magistrate may repress it by strong hand,
 if it be not otherwise to be repressed ? It is not with-
 out cause that I put this Quære to them ; for M. S.
 p. 50. doth allow of the Magistrates fighting against a
 Doctrin which is indeed Superstition, Heresie or
 Schism, and only pretendeth to be from God, when
 it is indeed from men. Also that Pamphlet called,
 As you were, p. 3. tells us, That it was neither
 Gamaliel's meaning, nor Mr. Goodwins, That e-
 very Way pretending to be from God must be let a-
 lone : but that only we are to refrain and let it alone
 till we are out of danger of fighting against God,
 while we endeavour to overthrow it. Now I assume
 that there are some who plead for Liberty of Con-
 science, who profess that they are certain, and fully
 assured upon demonstrative proofs, that the Presbyte-
 rial Way is not from God, nor according to the Mind
 of Jesus Christ : Therefore according to their Princi-
 ples, they must allow of the putting forth of the Ci-
 vil Coercive Power against the Presbyterial Way, &c.

Mr. Sterry likewise, who was the great Prea-
 cher at Whitehall in the days of Mr. Oliver Crom-
 wel, in a Sermon preached, Nov. 5. 1651. called
 England's Deliverance from the Northern Presby-
 tery, compared with its Deliverance from the Ro-

man Papacy, upon Jer. 16. 14, 15. *It shall no more be said, The Lord liveth that brought up the Children of Israel out of the Land of Egypt; But the Lord liveth that brought up the Children of Israel out of the Land of the North, &c.* Which Sermon was Printed by Order of those Gentlemen who pleased to call themselves a Parliament, gives us such an account of the Presbyterians; as was very grateful to the Powers then in being (though it was to the Presbyterians that they owed their very Being;) I shall lay down his very words: In his Epistle he saith thus; *Right honourable, I have desired in my Preaching, in my Prayers, to work with God even for the opening of the eyes of men, to see that the same Spirit which lay in the polluted Bed of Papacy may meet them in the perfumed Bed of Presbytery, &c.* To which purpose I have in my Sermon represented the same Spirit which dwells in the Papacy, when it enters into the PURER FORM OF PRESBYTERTY, as FULLER OF MYSTERY, so FULLER OF DESPITE AND DANGER, &c. In the Sermon it self; *Many daughters have done vertuously, but thou excellest them all: So may England now say to the Lord, In many Mercies, as especially that in saving us from this bloody design of the Egyptian Papacy, thou hast done graciously and wonderfully; but this last Mercy, by which thou savest us from the black Plots and bloody Powers of the NORTHERN PRESBYTERTY hath exceeded them all.* And in that Sermon he doth all along prefer the Papists before the Presbyterians, the Consequence of which doth not a-

mount to Toleration of them: Nay, our Brethren in *New-England*, though their Constitution hath as much of Liberty of Conscience in it, as any Place in the World, yet have found it to be a thing so very troublesome, as that they are grown quite weary of, and have put very severe Restraints upon it: Of which in the Second Part of the Excellent Friendly Debate, p. 227. and the Third Part, p. 244. any man may be abundantly satisfied; and it is well known that Quakers were hanged in *New-England*, which was a severity they did not meet with, either at *Rome*, or at *Constantinople*.

Mr. *Edwards*, in his Answer to the Apologetical Narration, p. 244. draweth an Argument against Toleration from the Judgment of the Divines in *New England*, who are against the Toleration of any Church-Government, or way but one. *For the Discipline of Jesus Christ (as we have it in Church-Government and Church-Covenant discussed (Question 31.) is not arbitrary, that one Church may practise one Form, and another another Form, as each one shall please, but is one and the same for all Churches, and in all the Essentials and Substantials of it unchangeable, and to be kept till the appearing of Jesus Christ: And if that Discipline which we here practise be (as we are persuaded of it) the same which Christ hath appointed, and therefore unalterable, we see not how another may be lawful: Upon which account they will not in New-England tolerate Brownists, Anabaptists, Antinomians, Quakers, and so careful they are in this matter, that they make*
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such enquiries into the inward Sentiments of the Minds even of the Laity, as among us are not usual; and in such Points too wherein the Publick Government is not concerned. Mr. Cotton the greatest Divine in *New-England*, and a precious man, is against Toleration, and holds that men may be punished for their Consciences, as appears by his Letter to Mr. *Williams*, and Mr. *Williams* his Answer, both Printed, and his Exposition on the Vials, *Vial. 3. p. 16, 17. & Vial. 4. p. 17.* Where he Answers this Objection, *Conscience should not be forced*, and this is his Answer; *Why do you think that Hereticks were not as conscionable in the Old Testament as now? If any man had a Conscience to turn men from God, he would have men of as much Conscience to cut them off:* So that upon the whole matter it doth appear, that this loud demand of Toleration is a very disingenious, nay a dishonest one; because it is asked by those who (if the Power were in their hands) would neither allow it to those they now ask it of, no nor so much as permit it to one another. One Instance of their Barbarity in this kind will not be tedious; the Presbyterians denied His late Majesty the Attendance of His own Chaplains in His own Family, for the Exercise of his own Devotion; and as the Presbyterians denied Him the use of the Common-Prayer whilst he was alive, the Independents would not allow Him to be buried by it after he was dead. Let them reflect a little upon their own demeanour in this Case, and then be as loud as they please in crying out for Moderation, Tenderness, Forbearance, Condescension.

6. *Civil Penalties in Religion, make men Hypocrites.*

And so I go on to the last Objection, that Civil Penalties do only make Hypocrites. This were an Excellent Argument against all Laws whatsoever if it were well pursued; but on the other side I take it to be a very clear Case, that Toleration makes Hypocrites; for it renders it safe for any man, in order to whatever end, to pretend some dissatisfactions against the present Ecclesiastical Constitutions, when in his own Mind he hath none: And this effect it hath had from the first moment of His Majesties Restauration, unto this time: Many Preachers then possessed of Benefices went away from them, because the Right Owners returned to them again, and yet these Men pretended Scruples against the Common-Prayer and Ceremonies, and so were looked upon as sufferers for their Conscience, and have ever since subsisted upon the strength of such pretensions: Of those who by the Death of the Right Incumbents continued in their ill-got Possessions till the Act of Uniformity: How many refused to conform more out of shame than Conscience? They could not without blushing practise those things which they formerly preached against, especially in the same place where they had done so; and accordingly some have conformed in other Countries than where they lived before, and more did proffer it, if they could have obtained to have been provided

vided for : And of those who did go out at Saint Bartholomews Day, 1662. How many were there who went out upon the great assurance which they had from their Agents in *London* of returning again in a few Weeks with Honour ? And among the People how many are there who go to Conventicles meerly to get Custom, as finding it to be a successful way, by becoming Members of such a Church, to get the Trade of such a Party.

I have now considered the Inconveniencies of that Fine Project called Liberty of Conscience, and the various pretences by which of late it hath been recommended to us : How much soever these imperfect Reasonings of mine may have fallen below the dignity of the Argument, I shall be so just to my Cause, as to refer the Reader where he may receive compleat and abundant satisfaction, *viz.* to those Excellent Votes of the Honourable House of Commons, *February 25. 1662.* where there is a full State of this Affair drawn up with an equal height of Piety and Wisdom ; the Reasons full and clear, carrying in them all the Advantages of Strength and Evidence : Those Renowned Gentlemen did then shew that they were able with their Pens to give an account of that Cause, for which very many of themselves, and Fathers, did honourably draw their Swords, and knew very well how to assert that Church by all the Rules of Christian Prudence, as well as they did formerly set inimitable Patterns of Christian Courage in suffering for it. There we may see and admire how those

Glorious Worthies came up to the greatness of themselves, and of the Argument ; and indeed they were both worthy of one another, they to defend, and that to be defended ; and as nothing was ever better penned than those Reasons, so there was scarce ever a better Occasion ; the best Church in *Europe*, was then bore witness to by the best House of Commons which ever sat in this Nation : Those Votes shall for ever remain as a lasting Monument as of the Zeal and Religion, so of the incomparable Endowments and Abilities of those who drew them up.

An Apostrophe to the Dissenting Brethren.

AND now I shall presume to offer a few words to our dissenting Brethren, that they would seriously bethink themselves what the Causes of their Separation are, how few, how slight ; that they would with them compare the Effects of it, what they have been, what they are, what they may come to be : Such things have already been brought about in Church and State (by means of those Divisions which the soberest among you did begin and foment, and none but they were valuable enough to give Support and Countenance unto) as they themselves (we are perswaded) did not intend, nor would foresee till they found it too late for to prevent them: Alterations are things which the Generality are naturally apt to be very fond of, but it is very seldom, and for a very little while, that they are found to answer the hopes conceived of them :
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Indeed if it were once agreed upon what those things were which would give a general satisfaction, and put an absolute end to this long and unhappy Controversie, such a Proposal were at least worth a Consideration: But if there be as great variety of Demands as Persons, and if it be as earnestly desired among great numbers, that their Neighbours should not be indulged, as that themselves should, and we have for many years found it by a dear bought Experience, that when men are once gone beyond the Rule, they wander every where, and without end; why should you not at last look upon it as adviseable to return to the Rule again? Especially considering, that those of the greatest Consideration among you are not against the having any rule at all, neither as yet have you been able to agree upon any other.

If it be to be wished that there should be any Church at all, that Church must have Articles, and must have Canons; there is not the smallest Society in the World can be kept together in order to the meanest end, but there must be some Rules which all its Members must submit unto, and be guided by: If therefore there ought to be kept up among us any such thing as the Assembling our selves together in order to the Publick Worship of Almighty God, then this must be done at some time, in some place, and after some manner, in some words, and by some Person appointed to attend upon the doing it: Now if there be nothing of all this left to be determined by humane Wisdom and Authority,
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but that this whole Thing with every one of all the Circumstances of it, are already determined in Holy Writ : The Church of *England* would be so far from opposing any thing of this, that she would gladly conform in all particulars to these Divine Establishments, and would be hugely thankful to any of our dissenting Brethren, if they will please to shew her whereabouts she may read the Form of Publick Worship, and withal the precise Method of that Order and Decency which ought to be used in it : For she hath been hitherto so unhappy, as not to know of any but general Directions, which she hath endeavoured with all Faithfulness to pursue : But after this Discovery she will take care, that her Children shall serve God in no other way than that of his own immediate appointment, if she can but once learn Directions where to meet with it. But if there be no such way of Worship, both for the thing it self and all its Circumstances, prescribed by God ; then so much of it as is not done by God, must unavoidably be done by such men whom God hath set over us, and who in such Cases are to be to us instead of God.

And let us consider, that the Ceremonies which are retained are very few, very ancient, and very becoming ; and to prevent all jealousies of the least manner of Superstition in the retaining them, the Church hath taken care to declare against all the Abuses which they were liable unto in the times of Popery. You value yourselves upon being Successors to the old Puritans ; but do you imagine that they would in the least
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have allowed many of those things which you have been the Authors of, or at least of which you have been the Instruments, and into which we hope you were not brought by any formed Resolutions of your own, but driven upon by those necessities in your Affairs, which your Zeal had unawares drawn you into? Instead therefore of being jealous of any concealed mischiefs in a few decent Rites and comely Usages, you are highly concerned to remember what have been the Evils of your own Schism, which you know your selves to have begun, and we are willing to believe did not see to the dismal end of; and which upon your own Principles you will never be able to provide against: The Liberties which you take, have encouraged and defended others in taking such Liberties, as no doubt you have been often sorry to see your selves undeniably alledged as Patrons and Examples of. And unless you can alledge some more necessary Causes of Separation than you hitherto have been able, you must be very partial Judges in your own Case, if you do not look upon your selves as responsible for the Consequences of all those Separations, which by your Arms and Authority any else was enabled to make, first with you, and after from you. Whatever suspicions you may entertain concerning Conformity, you will never be able to make a Bar strong enough to keep out the dreadful Effects of Non conformity. If no Settlement is to be complied with, but such a one which each particular Man doth in his own private thoughts

thoughts take to be the most adviseable in all respects as to Matter and Circumstance, and no longer than it doth appear to be so, then there is never like to be any Settlement in the World, at least not of any long Continuance. I shall in this Case make use only of the words of an eminent Non-conformist, in a Treatise which I have already mentioned, entituled, *Of the Religion of England*, asserting, *That the Reformed Christianity settled in its Latitude is the stability of the Kingdom*, p. 28. *Such is the complicated condition of humane Affairs, That it is exceeding difficult to devise a Rule or Model that shall provide for all whom Equity will plead for: Therefore the prudent and sober will acquiesce in any Constitution that is in some sort proportionable to the Ends of Government.* And again p. 38. *Nevertheless, if, when all is said, some dissatisfaction doth invincibly possess the Judgment, in that Case Christian Humility and Charity as well as Discretion adviseth such Persons to acquiesce in their private security and freedom, and not to reach after that Liberty that may unsettle the publick Order, and undermine the common Safety.*

Although it be a great, a seasonable and a concerning Truth, That it is more glorious to confess an Error, than to continue in one, yet because it may seem a severe Truth, I shall no more than barely mention it: If in earnest you are at least weary of divisions, do all which in you lieth on your part to put an end to them; and this you cannot pretend to have done, till you have complied with the Publick Order

as far as you believe you may lawfully, and where you cannot obey you may yet be silent. If there be a Ceremony which any one among you believes that he ought not to conform to, doth it thence follow, that he is obliged to make Parties against it, and for the sake of that one to abstain from all the rest, and to avoid all those other parts of the Church-Service and Communion, where the Rite which he scruples hath no manner of place?

Again, when from the Cause you fly into great Commendations of your Party, you should do well to avoid such expressions as, instead of tending to bespeak the Favour and Compassion of Authority, do rather tend to awake its caution, and to raise its jealousy: That which doth but look like a Threatning is by no means fit for an Inferiour to put into his Supplication. Not only the Honour, but the Safety of all Government doth depend upon this, to demurr at least upon the granting of that Request, which he who puts it up doth actually take before he asks, and in the very form of his asking it, doth more than insinuate the great danger which may be in denying him. And this methinks doth appear to have been an *Indecorum* in your eminent Advocate in *His Discourse of the Religion of England*, p. 23. Sect. 11. *How momentous in the ballance of the Nation those Protestants are that dissent from the present Ecclesiastical Policy*: Where he tells us of their great Number, their great Interest, their great Com-

Commerce, their many Relations, their great Understandings and Discretion; and in the close of all he adds, **NOR DO THEY WANT THE RATIONAL COURAGE OF ENGLISH MEN:** The meaning of which Words are at least very suspicious, as to the King, and as to the Church: Since the late Discourses of their Endeavours after an Union, their former separations do not only continue, but are managed in the same manner as formerly: On their Parts we do not hear of any beginnings toward a Compliance: One man indeed there was who made a Profession of something of this, but what reserves he had in his mind, whereby to render that Profession of his insignificant, let his after-Practices teach us, and withal give us warning what trust to repose in any General, though never so fair Promises.

And thus I have briefly and plainly laid down some of the most obvious Exceptions against the late much discoursed of Projects, Comprehension, Toleration, and a third made up of both them: Comprehension may indeed proceed from an Excess of goodness in those who are ready to grant it; but it is not very clear that those who are the most likely to desire it, will be most ready to make a good use of it: Indeed as to the thing it self, it is kept so much in the dark, that it is not, except by some very few, if by any, understood, who they are who either do desire or would accept it, or upon what terms it would be either given or taken; and as the nature of this thing is unknown,

so will the Issue be most uncertain. As to those two abatements which are usually mentioned, the taking away of Assent and Consent, and dispensing with the Obligation of Renouncing the Covenant; they are things which carry great and apparent dangers in them. He who desires to be excused from giving his Assent and Consent, can hardly be able to give any other account of that his desire than this: That he doth not believe the Doctrine of the Church, or doth not mean to conform to the orders of it. As to the other Particular, the Dispensing with the Renouncing of the Covenant; the very Proposal is methinks a very bold one, if we consider what was the occasion of the Covenant; who were the Authors; the Time in which it was entred into, the ends in order to which, what are the Contents of it, and how perpetual and indispensable they have all along declared the Obligation of it to be, what Effects it hath had already, and at any time may have upon the King, the Church, the Nation, and in an especial manner, upon the Old Cavaliers. And then as to Toleration, I have shewed the Inconveniencies to be innumerable and unavoidable, which it may at any time bring upon either of them; there is no Imposture which at this door, standing always open, may not enter into the Church: No Danger which by a dexterous management of such an unbounded Licence, may not have a very fair and easie passage made for it into the State. And as for any mixture of these two Contrivances, it will be so long before

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before the Bounds and Limits can be agreed upon to be set between them; so many things are to be considered of, before these two can with any satisfaction to either be suited to one another; that an Enquiry may I suppose be safely put off until a time of greater Leisure.

A Post

A Postscript to the Reader.

WHen I had put an End, as I thought, to your Trouble, (Good Reader) and my own, there came to my hands a new Pamphlet, entituled, *Certain Considerations tending to promote Peace and good Will amongst Protestants, very useful for the present times:* The Design of which is to promote the fore-mentioned Comprehension, which the Author doth endeavour to put a very good colour upon by laying down several Propositions; the Third of which is this, *That the late Civil Wars in England were not begun for the Extirpation of Episcopacy and Liturgy, or to settle the Presbyterian Government here, but meerly for Civil Rights,* as he adds afterwards. Now if this Gentleman only means, that the Grandees of the Party had in their Hearts no manner of zeal for or against any Form of Religion, any farther than as their other Ends and Designs were carried on by it, I shall readily grant it him; nay, I shall say this farther, That, besides Religion, the Civil Rights of the Nation were but plausible Colours, by which the Leading Men of that Party did set off their other Ends; such as Revenge, Humour, Discontent, Covetousness and Ambition. And this they were told publickly by one whom they knew to be able to make it good, in the excellent Declaration of *Aug. 12. 1642. Themselves*

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know what Overtures have been made by them, and with what Importunity for Offices and Preferments, what great Services should have been done for us, and what other undertakings were (even to the saving the Life of the Earl of Strafford) if we would confer such Offices upon them. But that Religion was the thing which they did make shew of, and by which they drew abundance of well-meaning but deluded People to their assistance, is so plain, and known so publickly, that it is no little wonder, that any should offer to out-face the Nation in so notorious a Case. Did not every Prefs and every Pulpit declare against Episcopacy, Liturgy and Ceremonies? Did not the Lords and Commons, by their Votes of *March 12. 1642.* resolve upon the Question, That an Army be forthwith raised for the Safety of the Kings Person, &c. and **PRESERVING THE TRUE RELIGION?** &c. Did they not in *July.* following put forth a Declaration concerning the miserable Distractions and Grievances this Kingdom now lieth in, by means of **JESUITICAL** and wicked Councillors now about His Majesty? wherein they tell us over and over again of the *Protestant Religion*, a great *Change of Religion*; That they should be for ever earnest to prevent a *Civil War*, and those miserable *Effects* which it must needs produce, if they may be avoided without the *Alteration of RELIGION*, &c. And in their Resolutions to live and die with the Earl of *Essex*, they tell us, That their Army was raised, for the **MAINTENANCE of the TRUE PROTESTANT RELIGION.** The

Plate, Wedding-rings, Thimbles and Bodkins, had never been brought in, if it had not been that the Cause was so often called, the Cause of God. Let any man read the Remonstrances and Declarations of the Two Houses, and then see whether Religion was not one of those things which they all along declared their Zeal for; and accordingly in all the Parliaments Quarters, the poor Surplice, the Organs, and the Common-Prayer-Book, were the first Objects of all their Fury. But because this present Design of Comprehension is particularly intended to gratifie some Clergy-men, let us enquire under what name they recommended the War unto the People: Was it not under the name of Gods Cause; the setting Christ on his Throne; fighting the Lords Battels? There is a Collection of their Sermons Printed, which will not suffer any man to doubt of this; out of which there is enough gathered to this purpose in *Evangelium Armatum*. And this Mr. Baxter hath in a late Book confessed as to himself: *When the Wars began, though the Cause it self lay in Controversies between King and Parliament; yet the thoughts that the Church and Godliness it self was deeply in danger by Persecution and Arminianism did much more to byass me to the Parliaments side, than the Civil Interest (which at the heart I little regarded.)* This Author likewise confesseth, That whatever was the Cause at the first, it soon became a War for Religion. And Mr. Love, a Person mentioned by this Author as one of great Merit, in his Sermon at the Uxbridge-Treaty, complains of the so

long letting alone the Two Plague-sores of Episcopacy and Common-Prayer-Book.

The Seventh Proposition is this, *That the Parliamentarians in the beginning of our Troubles declared, to abhor and detest all Designs of deposing and murdering His Late Sacred Majesty.* That they did declare against any such thing I readily grant, and, amongst other Reasons, for this, laid down by our Author, *That it had been else impossible for them to have gained the people as they did.* But that there were among the chief Contrivers of the Wars, Those who had a design upon the Kings Crown and Life, is a thing whereof there is great Evidence. If it be lawful to fight with a King, why is it not lawful to kill him? Swords and Bullets are Things which are by no means to be used against that Person which we think we ought not to destroy : And of the great danger which His Majesties Person was in at the Battel at Edge-hill, Himself hath informed us in a Declaration on that Subject. And in the Remonstrance of May 26. 1642. the Lords and Commons did plainly assume to themselves a Right to depose the King, in these words ; *If we should make the highest Precedents of former Parliaments our Patterns, there would be no cause to complain of want of Modesty and Duty in us, when we have not so much as suffered those things to enter into our thoughts, which all the World knows they put in act.* In which words there is thus much plainly contained, That whatever former Parliaments have done, they take themselves to have a Right to do ; Now former Parliaments have been over-
awed

awed into the deposing of Kings : Now that they had their Eyes upon those particular Proceedings of former Parliaments, appears by those Words, *All the World knows what they put in act* : His Majesty in His Answer to that Declaration of theirs, tells us of two Gentlemen who said publicly, unreprieved in the Parliament House, one, *That the Happiness of this Kingdom did not depend upon Him, or upon any of the Royal Branches of that Root* ; Another, *That he was not worthy to be King of England* : And as for the Royal Power it was plainly demanded from him in the Nineteen Propositions.

The Eighth Consideration is this, *That the Non-conforming Presbyterians had both their hearts and hands in the Restauration of His Majesty to His Royal Throne, for which Mr. Love and Mr. Gibbons lost their Heads.*

Of all things I should least have expected, that the Advocates for the Presbyterians should have insisted upon their Merits to His Majesty, or the Royal Family, for which their best Apology is the Act of Oblivion ; and if they would have insisted, yet however methinks they should of all men not have made Mr. Love the Person to have insisted on : As for that Party of the *Scots*, which he corresponded with ; it is no Part of their Wisdom to remind His Majesty of the Usage which he found from them. As to Mr. Love, the Learned Author of *Samaritanism* hath informed us, p. 152. That at the Execution of Arch-bishop Land, he uttered these Words with great Triumph, *Art thou come Little Will ? I am glad to see thee here, and hope to see the rest of the Bishops here*

here e're long; and having dipped his Handkerchief in his blood, he rode with it to *Uxbridge*, and used these Words; *Here is the Blood of that Proud Prelate, I hope for more of their Bloods e're long.* And this doth against my will lead me to the consideration of his Sermon at *Uxbridge*, at the time of the Treaty. Amongst many Scandals cast upon the King, he herein compares Him to *Charles the Ninth of France*, who after a Treaty of Peace made the Massacre, and to *Antiochus*, of whom we read, *Dan. 11. 23. That through his Policy he shall cause Craft to prosper in his hand, and by Peace shall destroy many, and, after the League made with him he shall work deceitfully:* After these great Complements toward the King, he tells us in his Preface; *'Tis the Sword, not Disputes or Treaties which must end this Controversie, wherefore turn your Plow-shares into Swords, and your Pruning-hooks into Spears to fight the Lords Battles, to avenge the Blood of the Saints which hath been spilt, it must be avenged either by us, or upon us: Let me but quote the words of the Prophet Jeremiah. Chap. 48. Vers. 10. Cursed be he that doth the Work of the Lord negligently: Cursed be he that keepeth his Sword from Blood, &c.* And I will be bold to say this, that the most malicious suggestions which are insisted upon in the Votes of Non-Address are to be met with in one Page of that Sermon, p. 32. We read, *'Twas the Lord who troubled Achan, because he troubled Israel. O that in this our State-Physicians would resemble God, to cut off those from the Land who have distempered it. Melius est ut pereat Unus quam Unitas.*

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He tells us, pag. 36, 37. of three sorts of Persons, with whom Peace is not to be made: First, Truce-breakers: *O what deceitful Work hath our Parliament met with on the very nick of Treaties for Peace, &c.* Secondly, Idolaters are not meet Persons to have a Peace with, Jehosaphat was checked for having an Affinity with Ahab an Idolatrous King, because he loved him that hated the Lord, therefore wrath was upon him from the Lord: But Asa was commended because he removed Maachach from being Queen, because she was an Idolatress: I may say, what Jehu said to Joram, *What Peace can there be so long as the Whoredoms of Jezebel THE QUEEN are so many, we may make Peace with Papists now, but who will give us assurance that they will keep their Covenants: Thirdly, men wholly under the guilt of much Innocent blood are not meet Persons to be at peace with, till all the guilt of blood be expiated and avenged, either by the Sword of the Law, or the Law of the Sword, else a Peace can neither be safe nor just, And Pag. 42. Are Peace and Truth the Ingredients which must heal us? O then dote not too much upon this Treaty of Peace, which is this day beginning: And again, Will the Blood-thirsty Rebels of Ireland, the Idolatrous Papists of England, the Pompous Prelates, the rest of the corrupt Clergy, and the profaner sort of the Nation, who joyn hand in hand together: Are these likely to be Patrons of Truth? Deceive not your selves, there is little likelihood of Peace with such: What I said before, I say again, Either they must grow better, or we must wax worse, before we can agree.*

I shou'd willingly have suffered these Things

to sleep, but that our Author forced me upon it, by insisting upon the Merits of Mr. Love, and Mr. Love himself in his Speech upon the Scaffold justifies himself as to all that he had done in relation to the Publick Differences; *I bless my God, I am free from the Blood of all men, &c. I do declare that I die with my Judgment set against Malignity, I do hate both name and thing, I still retain AS VEHEMENT A DETESTATION of Malignant Interest AS EVER I DID:* And again, *I die cleaving to all those Oaths, Vows, Covenants, Protestations, that were imposed by the Two Houses of Parliament, as owning them, and in dying with my Judgment for them. To the Protestation, the Vow and Covenant, the Solemn League and Covenant.*

This Author cannot deserve any way so well of the Party he pleads for, as not to give us occasion to enquire into past Matters: For whatever Inconveniencies may be expected from Comprehension or Toleration, by the nature of the things themselves, they will be found to be very much ascertained and increased, if we consider the Persons who do desire either of them: I suppose we shall hear no more of the Merits of Love, and if this Gentleman doth think fit to change him for any other Instance: I shall advise that he would pitch upon such a Person as hath wrote nothing, nor been in any Publick Employment, lest otherwise he should force us upon those Enquiries which will be, it is to be doubted, little for the credit of him whose name is brought in Question, and which I shall take very little delight in.

The E N D.

THE
OATHS
OF
ALLEGIANCE
AND
SUPREMACY.

The Oath of ALLEGIANCE.

I A. B. Do truly and sincerely acknowledge, profess, testify and declare in my Conscience before God and the World, that our Sovereign Lord King Charles is Lawful and Rightful King of this Realm, and of all other His Majesties Dominions and Countries: And that the Pope, neither of himself, nor by any Authority of the Church or See of Rome, or by any other means with
any

any other, hath any Power or Authority to depose the King, or to dispose any of His Majesties Kingdoms or Dominions, or to Authorize any Forreign Prince to Invade or Annoy Him or His Countries, or to discharge any of His Subjects of their Allegiance and Obedience to His Majesty, or to give License or Leave to any of them to bear Arms, raise Tumults, or to offer any violence or hurt to His Majesties Royal Person, State or Government, or to any of His Majesties Subjects within His Majesties Dominions.

Also I do swear from my Heart, that notwithstanding any Declaration or Sentence of Excommunication or Deprivation made or granted, or to be made or granted by the Pope or his Successors, or by any Authority derived or pretended to be derived from him or his See, against the said King, His Heirs or Successors, or any Absolution of the said Subjects from their Obedience; I will bear Faith and true Allegiance to His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and Him and Them will defend to the uttermost of my Power, against all Conspiracies and Attempts whatsoever, which shall be made against His or Their Persons, Their Crown and Dignity, by reason or colour of any such Sentence or Declaration, or otherwise;
and

and will do my best endeavour to disclose and make known unto His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, all Treasons and Traiterous Conspiracies which I shall know or hear of, to be against Him or any of Them.

And I do further swear, That I do from my Heart abhor, detest and abjure, as impious and heretical, this damnable Doctrine and Position, That Princes which be excommunicated or deprived by the Pope, may be Deposed or Murthered by their Subjects, or any other whatsoever.

And I do believe, and in Conscience am resolved, That neither the Pope, nor any Person whatsoever, hath power to absolve me of this Oath, or any part thereof, which I acknowledge by good and full Authority to be lawfully Administred unto me, and do Renounce all Pardons and Dispensations to the contrary. And all these things I do plainly and sincerely acknowledge, and Swear according to these express words by me spoken, and according to the plain and common sence and understanding of the same words, without any Equivocation or mental Evasion, or secret Reservation whatsoever: And I do make this Recognition and Acknowledgement heartily, willingly and truly, upon the true Faith of a Christian. So help me God, &c.

The

The Oath of SUPREMACY.

I A. B. Do utterly testifie and declare in my Conscience, That the Kings Highness is the only Supreme Governour of this Realm, and of all other His Highness Dominions and Countries, as well in all Spiritual or Ecclesiastical Things or Causes, as Temporal: And that no Forreign Prince, Person, Prelate, State or Potentate, hath, or ought to have any Jurisdiction, Power, Superiority, Pre-eminence or Authority Ecclesiastical or Spiritual within this Realm: And therefore I do utterly renounce and forsake all Forreign Jurisdictions, Powers, Superiorities and Authorities, and do promise from henceforth I shall bear Faith and true Allegiance to the Kings Highness, His Heirs and lawful Successors, and to my Power shall assist and defend all Jurisdictions, Priviledges, Pre-eminences and Authorities granted, or belonging to the Kings Highness, His Heirs and Successors, or united and annexed to the Imperial Crown of this Realm. So help me God, and by the Contents of this Book.

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The End.

